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POCKET NOVELS



Tiger-Heart, the Tracker.



TIGER-HEART, THE TRACKER;

OR,

THE TRAPPER OF THE TWIN CASCADES.

A ROMANCE OF INDIANA IN 1811.

BY CAPT. CHARLES HOWARD,

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THE TRAILER

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OR

THE TRAILER OF THE WEST

A ROMANCE OF INDIANA IN 1811

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TIGER-HEART, THE TRACKER.

CHAPTER I.

THE VICTIM OF THE TRAP.

THE sear and yellow leaves of autumn were falling in the loveliest glen of the Wabash country, and the softest of Indian summer skies, studded with myriads of glittering worlds, looked down upon a scene about which was destined to cluster the startling acts of a forest drama.

It was the night of the third of November, 1811—four days prior to the famous conflict of Tippecanoe.

And, as I have mentioned the *locale* of my initial scene, let me pause here and describe it as it appeared then, not as I saw it a few brief months ago.

Among the several tributaries of the Wabash is a diminutive stream rejoicing then, as now, in the suggestive name of Fall Creek. At a point nearly two miles above its mouth, lies the glen already mentioned. It begins at the foot of what is now known as Williamsport falls, in Warren county, Indiana; and terminates below the perpendicular rocks that almost hide its beauties. Through this glen at the period that witnesses the opening of our border romance, flowed a beautiful stream, supplied with crystal water from the two noble cascades that leaped over the precipices, one hundred feet above its sandstone bed. A variety of forest trees dotted the ravine or glen, and from the edge of the cliffs tall pines seemed to cleave the fleecy clouds, and serve for the nests of the birds of the upper air.

The largest of the cascades jetted far over the cliffs like its lesser neighbor, and formed a beautiful sheet of limpid water, behind which, in the stupendous concavity of the rocks, a troop of horse could hide with ease. The smaller cascade sported to the left, and also sheltered a hiding nook.

Several hundred feet to the right of the first fall, and down the glen, a gloomy corridor ran through solid rock to the forest above; but of this spot more anon.

I have intimated that the night of the third of November, 1811, was a period of time celebrated for its bewitching beauty. The murmur of the twin cascades seemed the lullaby of that night, and the falling leaves gave forth a pleasing sound.

Suddenly upon the autumnal scene, a disturbing element appeared.

A man emerged from a gloomy spot near the foot of the cascade, and listened intently with bent body, and eyes cast down the glen. Undoubtedly some sound had attracted his attention—some suspicious sound, for he held his rifle at full cock, and his rough-skinned finger rested lightly on the broad trigger.

His face, partially revealed by the rays of the rising moon, proclaimed him a trapper, of six and thirty, and, cleanly shaven, was not unhandsome. He wore the usual buck-skin garments of the border ranger; but the shock of black hair that covered his head, could not in its turn boast of a covering.

"If I didn't hear a white oath, then I must hev been dreamin'," he muttered at last, still listening and looking down the glen. "It isn't late—not quite midnight, I should jedge," and he glanced at a bright star just visible over the cliff, "an' it's hardly probable thet I hev trapped the thief already. The accursed Kickapoos hev bothered me long enough; they've worried the patience out o' Silas Frost, an' the Frosts ever war a patient family. Here I've been tryin' to make a decent livin', trappin' mink, beaver an' the like, honestly; harm nobody, an' the infernal red dogs must come an' steal my time, must sneak up here from their dirty wigwams an' help themselves out o' my traps. They've taken nigh onto twenty beaver from me afore I could git my fingers on the fur; they've—curse their red pictures! they've riled Si Frost an' he'll go hair-huntin' himself afore long."

He paused rather abruptly, for a plashing in the water some distance down the ravine fell upon his ears, and rounding the dark rock by which he stood, he started forward.

"It ar no beaver in the trap this time!" he ejaculated, with an air of triumph. "Some fur-stealer hes put his foot into my b'ar-trap. I 'lowed I'd catch an Injun at the bend."

The noise in the water continued as the trapper approached the spot, and, when he reached the foot of the glen, he paused and dropped to the ground.

"I knowed it!" he exclaimed, in an undertone, brimful of satisfaction, as he peered among the trees that studded the banks of the stream. "The old b'ar-trap hes caught the stealer of my fur, an' he must hev a strong leg if the heavy jaws hev'n't broken every bone in it. I'll go an' taunt him a little afore I finish him. I wonder how he'll take his situation?"

Again the trapper moved forward until the moonlight enabled him to see the prey of the huge bear-trap—an athletic youth wearing the garments of a Kickapoo warrior.

The jaws of the giant trap which the hunter had hidden beneath the surface of the stream, had closed about the Indian's leg, and held him with a grip of steel. A strong chain secured the trap to a young pine, and at the iron knot the youth was tugging with a strength that proclaimed him a very Samson of the forest.

For several moments, and with a sarcastic smile wreathing his lips, the trapper watched the terrible struggles for freedom—struggles accompanied with intense pain, as the face of the trapped one revealed, and when at last he rose to his feet, it was with a laugh as bitter as revengeful.

The Indian ceased his struggles, and fastened a pair of dark eyes upon his adversary.

"So, Mr. Kickapoo, I've caught you at last," began Silas Frost, moving toward the caged bird and halting leisurely almost within arm's reach of the pine. "Beaver-stealin' doesn't prosper to-night I should say, jedgin' from the contents of the b'ar-trap. When I put it in the water didn't I say: 'Si Frost, you'll catch a big beaver now,' an' I've caught him, too. You've helped yourself to about twenty o' my beaver, eh, Kickapoo? But," and here the trapper's hunting-knife was drawn with tantalizing sloth, "I calkilate on protectin' my traps now. Say, why warn't you showin' your manhood with the Prophet up on Tippecanoe, instead o' molestin' a

peaceable man? Gin'ral Harrison's goin' to tame you red devils; but I guess thar's one what Si Frost's goin' to tame Kickapoo, how will you take it?"

With the knife tightly clutched in his hand, and determination traceable on every lineament of his hard, swarthy face, the trapper stepped forward; but the Indian did not move.

During the trapper's talk the hunted one regarded him close y, and once or twice a faint smile toyed with the compressed lips, and a gleam of merriment, just perceptible, danced in his dark eyes.

"Any Injun who'd steal beaver when his nation marches to battle, isn't fit to live," hissed the hunter, in contempt, creeping like a death shadow upon the victim of the trap. "I hate a coward and a thief—the Frosts always did."

"So do I, Si Frost."

The trapper stopped as though he had received an arrow in the side.

Had the Indian spoken?

The red lips were still closely knit, and he had not seen them move.

Still some person near at hand had uttered the words, "So do I, Si Frost," and in good English at that.

The puzzled expression that clothed the trapper's face, was enough to provoke a smile, and a smile it drew to the lips of the entrapped.

"What are you laughin' at?" angrily cried the flushed borderman, springing forward impulsively and clutching the naked arm of the red-skin. "Open your head an' answer me, or I'll shake yer leg off, an' you cl'ar out o' the trap."

"With but one leg I'd have a good time getting to Harrison, wouldn't I, Frost?" said the red lips, and their owner laughed when he saw the trapper start back at the sound of his voice.

"By all the beaver of the Wabash!" exclaimed Frost, staring at the occupant of the trap. "I've caught a white man!"

"I should say you have, and my leg tells me that I am an unwilling prisoner."

Silas Frost sprung forward.

"I'll let you out in a second," he said, dropping his rifle,

and turning his attention to the huge spring that held the jaws together. "Why didn't you tell me in the first place what you war? Whiz! but yer leg's swellin'! No trampin' 'bout on it for several days. Curse this spring; but thar! she's open now; pull out."

He had thrown his whole weight on the spring, and the jaws, covered with blood, reluctantly relinquished their hold, and slowly crept apart.

The liberated man needed no command to withdraw his limb, and the next moment he sunk at the foot of the pine, completely exhausted.

"I hate the man who sot that trap in the creek!" said the trapper, casting a glance of pity upon the youth, who had fainted. "He's a mean, good-for-nothin' dog, if his name is Si Frost. Some o' the Frosts hev been guilty o' mean tricks. Thar war old Lamech Frost, who sot a trap in his chicken-coop once an' caught his son Si," and a grim smile played with the speaker's lips. "But," after a long pause, "this boy hes got to be 'tended to, an' that right off. He's got a bad leg on 'im; mebbe," with a kindly sigh, "I'll hev to cut it off."

Then he bent over the youth, and with tender hands examined the injured member in the light of the moon.

Unconscious of what was transpiring, the young man slept, nor did he open his eyes until the trapper had borne him to a secret place behind the largest cascade.

About him were evidences that he lay in the hunter's home, for numberless pelts bung against the walls of the retreat, and his couch was composed of dressed deer-skins. To his right a small fire blazed, and the light revealed the form of his friend.

"You're in one o' Si Frost's homes," said the trapper, answering the inquiring look which the youth threw about the cavern, "an' I reckon you're as safe hyar as you would be with Harrison. By George! I never expected to catch a white man in the b'ar-trap," and a broad grin suffused the trapper's face. "If you hedn't spoken when you did, I guess you wouldn't be hyar now. But say, boy, what's yer name, and whar be you goin'? Tell me all about it."

"I can do that in a minute," replied the youth, moving in

the couch at the expense of a painful limb. "My name is Hiram Gleason, and I was on my way to Harrison."

"Goin' to help the old fellow ag'in Tecumseh, I s'pose?"

"Yes. I am serving the old soldier now as a spy. I am from the Vincennes country, with important intelligence which he must have against to-morrow night; but," glancing sorrowfully at his bandaged leg, "he will not get it now."

"Don't fret, boy. Harrison will get the news!"

Hiram Gleason looked strangely into the trapper's eyes.

"You want to know how Harrison 'll get your news, eh?" said Frost, interpreting the look. "I'll take it to 'im."

"You?"

"Yes, me—Si Frost. Don't I know every foot of ground along the Wabash? Hevn't I trapped beaver ever since the time I helped Mad Anthony whip the Injuns on the Maumee in ninety-four? and hevn't I trapped all the time hereabouts? Well, I reckon I hev. Yes, Hi Gleason, I'm goin' to tell Harrison jest what you'll tell me. But I'll not leave you here alone. No; you must hev some one to dress your leg, an' the very person isn't fur off. Jest lie still a minute."

With a light smile the trapper rose and glided from the cavern, and the youth took occasion to inquire into the state of his wounded limb.

A shudder came over him when he recalled the moment of the springing of the trap, and the old pain returned. Fortunately no bones were broken; but the limb had undergone fearful laceration, and the muscles had been crushed.

He was congratulating himself upon the fortunate termination of his fearful adventure, when a shadow fell across the inner surface of the cascade, and looking up he beheld the trapper.

But he was not alone.

Beside him, timid as the fawn, walked an Indian girl; beautiful in form and features, and seemingly a child in years. She was romantically clad in beaded doeskin, and Silas Frost smiled when he saw the scout's gaze fall admiringly upon her.

"Pretty, isn't she, boy?" he said, proudly. "I tell you such a gal isn't to be picked up in the woods every day. There's a history connected with Omeme's life, which she

may tell you while I'm gone. She can talk English pretty well, and you'll find her a good surgeon, too. But, don't fall in love with her—don't, boy, for Si Frost will frost-bite your hopes when he comes back. She's his already."

Without another word he led the Indian girl to the couch, and saw her seat herself at the youth's side.

"Now," said the trapper, impatiently, "tell me what you want Harrison to know, for I want to be off. I haven't seen the Gin'ral since he helped me an' Wayne."

In a few moments the scout disclosed the important secrets of the spy to the trapper, who folded Omeme to his heart as he rose to depart.

"Watch vigilantly while I'm away, girl," he said, in a low tone. "Something tells me that Tiger-Heart will come for you ere long; but do not fear; he shall not have you."

On the threshold of the cavern he halted.

"I'll be back in two days, Gleason," he said, cheerfully. "Keep a stout heart in yer bosom, and yer eyes open; but remember," and he glanced at Omeme, "she is mine!"

A moment later the trapper's form disappeared, and the forest beauty and the crippled scout occupied the cavern alone.

Out into the glen Silas Frost made his way, and soon reached the widening of the stream. But he did not see the dark shadows that the moon threw from the cliffs, nor did he dream that the tomahawk hovered over the heads of those for whom he would have forfeited his life.

He paused a moment beside the clear water, then ascended to the top of the banks, and plunged into the shadowy woods.

CHAPTER II.

TIGER-HEART.

For several minutes after the trapper's departure, the inmates of the cavern did not speak.

Omeme sat near Hiram Gleason, staring vacantly into the fire, and the scout was studying the contour of her oval face, and wondering where Si Frost had culled such a matchless woodland flower. The ruddy light bathed her entire form in a beauty bordering on the romantic, and the bewitching tableau was not broken until the prolonged hoot of an owl penetrated the retreat.

Then Omeme sprung to her feet, and, with a smiling glance at the spy, listened for a repetition of the cry.

It came at last.

"Indians?" ejaculated the youth, assuming a sitting posture, and stretching forth his hand for the rifle that lay near.

"No," answered the girl, turning and pushing him back with gentle power. "Tawah hoots to tell Omeme that he on the right trail. Sky Eyes lie down, and rest his leg; it get well quicker if he lies still, like the dead snake."

"But I can talk, Omeme," he said, half interrogatively, and with a smile.

"Talking won't hurt hunter's leg," replied the girl, and then moving from the fire she seated herself at his side. "He can tell Omeme now how he got into the bear-trap. Tawah put it in water to catch Indians that steal beaver."

"And will Omeme tell me all about herself, then?"

"Yes."

An expression of satisfaction overpread the scout's face, and he began the narrative of his scout from Vincennes to the glen.

"I could see no trap when I stepped into the creek," he said, "nor did I know that this ravine was inhabited. When in the middle of the stream, I felt something yield beneath my foot, and realized my danger. I tried to escape, but, of

course, the strong jaws of the bear-trap were too quick for me. I thought they had crushed every bone in my leg, and I struggled fiercely for freedom. At last Tawah, as you call him, came, and I was released."

"Then Sky Eyes never dreamed that Omeme lived behind the silver water?" asked the Indian girl, curiously, when the young spy had finished.

"No, I never dreamed such a beautiful dream, girl," he answered. "How long have you dwelt here? Come, tell me all."

For a moment the Indian girl seemed to be recalling the past, for her eyes wandered from the scout, and rested on the gray wall of the cavern home.

"A long, long time," she said, scarce above a whisper, never turning her gaze. "Ever since Tawah stole me from Tiger-Heart."

Her words excited the spy's curiosity to an uncontrollable degree, and in the provoking pause that followed Omeme's whisperings, his hand crept forward and clutched her sleeve.

"Why don't you proceed, girl?" he asked. "I am dying to hear about Tiger-Heart."

"Many, many moons ago," she began, her voice resuming its old mellowness, "Omeme was a little girl on the banks of the Miami, that flows through the land of the rising sun. She was the grandchild of Puckeshinwa, the Shawnee, whom Tawah says the pale-face struck in Logan's war when they fought the big battle at the pointed land.* Her father was Ossetoba, and she grew into a little girl, seeing many white men, but liking them not. By and by a pale-face who wore a red coat came to Ossetoba's lodge, and told Omeme that he was fairer than the stars, and offered to make her his squaw. But she would not listen, and the red-coat went to Ossetoba and gave him presents of yellow money and new rifles. He bought Omeme with such things; but still she crept from him to the lodge of Tiger-Heart, who loved her in secret, though she knew it not. Ossetoba and the pale-face came to the lodge, and Tiger-Heart met them at the door. There was the muttering of the storm in his eyes, and

* The battle of Point Pleasant, at the mouth of the Kanawha, October 10th, 1774.

when Ossetoba put forth his hand for his child, Tiger-Heart struck him with his hatchet."

Here the Indian girl paused, and a shudder crept over her fragile frame.

"The chief struck your father!" said the scout, calling her back to her thrilling narrative.

"Deep into Ossetoba's brain sunk the Shawnee's tomahawk," resumed the girl, "and he stepped upon the trail which his fathers had trodden. Then Tiger-Heart flung the red-coat far from him, and fled into the forest with Omeme." For many days the red-men hunted for the chief and his companion, and at last they chased him from his hiding-place. Like a deer he fled with Omeme in his arms, and the mad Shawnees on his track. But they hemmed him in, and he halted upon the high banks of the Miami. Omeme heard him say that her people should never have her again—that she should be Tiger-Heart's, and over her head he raised the hatchet which had drunk her father's blood. But then a pale-face leaped from the shadows of a clump of bushes, and tore Omeme from Tiger-Heart's arms."

"What became of the chief?" asked the scout.

"The hunter flung him into the river, and then, with Omeme in his arms, plunged in himself. He fought the water and bore Ossetoba's child up the wooded bank. The Shawnees followed; but the white hunter ran like the deer, and left them far behind. To this lodge he bore Omeme, and here with him she has lived since that bloody time."

"Then the pale-face is Tawah, or, as I know him best, Silas Frost?"

"The pale-face who saved Omeme is Tawah," answered the girl, with a glow of pride.

After a long silence the scout spoke again.

"Does Tiger-Heart still live?"

"Tiger-Heart lives in peace with his people again, but ever since that night he has hunted for Omeme. Tawah says that the red-coat has become a great chief among the Shawnees, and that sometimes he hunts with Tiger-Heart."

"Omeme, did you ever love the Shawnee chief?"

"No!" was the prompt reply. "His heart was too full of deeds of blood, and Omeme's has grown into that rapper's."

"You love Tawah?"

Her eyes dropped and the spy saw a look of loving pride wreath her ripe, red lips. She had replied to his impertinent question.

"If Tiger-Heart is a good trailer, he must find Omeme some day," he said. "He will never relinquish the quest. know the Shawnee."

Omeme shook her head.

"He will hunt Omeme till he finds her, or the point of Tawah's knife. He has never reached the silver water in his trailings. Tawah has never seen him in these woods. But he will come!" This was spoken confidently. "One moon ago Omeme dreamed that he came to her couch, and that the red-coat stood beside him. His hand touched Omeme's arm, when she leaped from the doe-skins with a wild cry to find Tawah laughing at her fright. Often Omeme has dreamed of Tiger-Heart, and the voices that whisper in sleeping ears do not always float over forked tongues. Sky Eyes, Tiger-Heart and the red-coat will find Omeme some day."

"God forbid, girl!"

"They will find her when Tawah's arm is not near to save," continued the girl, with a seriousness that commanded attention; "but if Sky Eyes is at hand he will fight for the hunted one."

"I will die for you, Omeme," ejaculated the scout, and drawing the trembling girl to his side he snatched a kiss from her lips. "Let the bloodhounds come while Tawah is away, and they will find another white man who will shed his heart's blood between them and their victim."

And, as he released the girl and looked into her bright eyes, he recalled the parting words of Silas Frost:

"You must not love Omeme, for she is mine!"

Already, almost before the trapper-spy had left the vicinity of the twin cascades, he had disregarded the injunction, for the quick beatings of his heart told him that he loved the Shawnee.

And then he wondered if, after the Indian fashion, Silas Frost had ever married Ossetoba's daughter.

To satisfy his doubts he turned to question the girl.

"Could Omeme love another pale-face besides 7 awah?" he asked, gently.

"She is his; how can she?"

"But she is not his squaw. Until a girl becomes a squaw she can love whom she pleases."

He knew that his last words would draw the sought-for information from the Shawnee girl, and he fixed his eyes steadily upon her. She was looking into the fire when he spoke, and her lips were moving to reply, when she suddenly turned her head and gazed down the cavern in the direction of the smaller cascade.

A sound which the scout's ears had not heard escaped not notice by the girl's, made vigilant by being hunted by two fierce lovers, and he was about to press her for a reply, believing that she was practicing a woman's artifice to deceive him, when she turned suddenly, noiselessly, and laid her hand on his arm.

"Look, Sky Eyes," she said, in a low whisper, pointing to a heap of rock that guarded the entrance to the cavern at the edge of the cascade.

"I see nothing, girl; your eyes—"

"The arrow on the stone!" she said, interrupting him. "It fell from the rocks overhead, and the white water flung it there."

Then the scout saw the feathered missile on the wet boulder.

"Indians up there," said Omeme, glancing upward. "Mayhap Tiger-Heart and the red-coat hunt to-night for Omeme."

With her own name still quivering on her lips, the red girl rose, and started toward the arrow.

Hiram Gleason put forth his arm to detain her; but she eluded his grip.

"It may be some infernal Indian decoy," he cried, alarmed at the girl's supposed danger. "I never heard it drop, and my ears are as good as hers. But, perhaps—"

Omeme had reached the rock and was putting forth her hand for the arrow.

The next second she had clutched it, and the next started from the stone with a wild cry.

For, as her fingers touched the barbed shaft, a painted

face, crowned with a tuft of feathers, shot above the rock, and a red-skinned hand darted forward for its beautiful prey!

Following the hand, the body of a giant appeared, and the girl, staggering toward the fire, with her eyes glaring at the demon, gasped the name she feared:

"*Tiger-Heart!*"

With a cry of horror that almost drowned the utterance of the terrible name, and despite his lacerated limb, the white scout sprung to his feet, and started forward!

He was ready to die for the Shawnee girl.

CHAPTER III.

THE SNOW-BIRD OF TIPPECANOE.

NOT far from the western bank of Tippecanoe river, at its junction with the Wabash, stood, as the student of western history knows, the town of Elskatawa, the famous Shawnee "Prophet," and brother of Tecumseh. Prior to the summer of 1808, the Shawnees had inhabited the country round about Greenville; but the scheming brothers, eager to carry out plans formed against the United States, thought best to change their base, and therefore moved to the spot now mentioned.

The influence of the twain was all-powerful, and under the very eyes of the authorities, their diabolical conspiracy grew into gigantic proportions. The Prophet, by his infernal sorceries, had secured many fanatic followers, whom Tecumseh had cemented to the common cause with the eloquence for which he was famed. The settlement known in history as the Prophet's Town, contained Shawnees, Pottawatamies, Chippewas, Ottawas and Winnebagoes. A few Kickapoos called themselves sojourners there; but, as that nation never entered with its heart into the conspiracy, they met with a cool reception.

On the self same evening that witnessed the springing of the bear-trap on its human prey, an Indian runner entered

the town and hastened to a lodge, the adornments of which proclaimed it the abode of some noted person.

For an hour prior to the Pottawatamie's arrival, it was evident that the bearer of important news was expected, for the inhabitants of the hot-bed of treason cast anxious glances toward the south, and walked the streets impatiently. Therefore, the appearance of the runner was greeted with a shout, and he found hundreds of red-men about him before he reached the decorated lodge.

He parted the curtains with a degree of superstitious reverence; nor did he cross the threshold until a voice on the inside bade him enter. Then he disappeared, for the curtains dropped behind him, and he found himself face to face with the man who is responsible for the bloody battle of Tippecanoe. This individual was Elskatawa, the one-eyed Shawnee Prophet, and he stood before the runner clad in all the hideous paraphernalia of sorcery. His face was streaked with yellow ochre and vermilion, and a pair of buffalo-horns, about the roots of which hung a shock of hair, crowned his naturally repulsive head. His body was enveloped in a long robe, and the tips of his moccasins, said to have been fashioned of the skin of white captives, were ornamented with the dried heads of rattlesnakes.

A fire that burned in the center of the lodge, revealed this repulsive personage to the runner, who involuntarily started back.

But Elskatawa suddenly moved forward, and his painted fingers closed about the Pottawatamie's arm.

"The Pottawatamie comes from the south," he said, in that shrill voice which had spoken the doom of many captives far nobler than he. "And he knows something about the white devils?"

"Wabasso left the lodges of the Kickapoos as the sun crept from the Wabash. The white chief is coming to strike the red-men."

Elskatawa started, and concealed the pallor of fear that darted athwart his face.

"He has struck his tents, then?" he asked. "What does he say?"

"He says that if Elskatawa does not cry peace, he will de-

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stroy his town and cornfields, and that the red-men must freeze when the snow comes."

The Prophet, starting back, laughed bitterly at the delivery of this message.

It was evident that he had considered Harrison's threats mere braggadocio; but now he was learning that forbearance had ceased to be a virtue, and that "the stern soldier of ninety-four," was marching to punish with a relentless hand.

"Wabasso can depart now," he said, after a brief silence. "The Indians without the sacred lodge will question him about his news."

"What shall Wabasso tell them?"

"Say that the white chief is still at Vincennes. I will rouse them when the time comes."

"Then Elskatawa will meet the soldier on the war-path? Tecumseh is absent."

"Yes; but the Great Spirit has sworn to give the battle into the hands of his own people."

"Elskatawa has talked with him, then?"

"He took his soul to Manitou land, and it sat on the sacred bear-skin, and talked with the Great Spirit. Then it returned to Elskatawa's body. Now go, Wabasso."

With a look of awe and belief, the Pottawatamie regarded the red liar a moment, and then, glad to escape from the tent of one whose soul had peered into the mysteries of the unseen hunting-grounds, he beat a precipitate retreat; and the crowd without the lodge followed him away, clamoring for the message he had borne to the village.

The curtains had scarcely dropped behind the runner—the bearer of bad tidings—when the Prophet doffed his grotesque garments. Carefully he removed the buffalo-horns, and clothed his feet with a pair of plainer moccasins. He next proceeded to wash the ochreous compounds from his face, and when he had completed his toilette, he seemed another man.

"Elskatawa will go and see the Snow-bird of Tippecanoe," he said, pushing back the long hair that streamed over his face, much after the manner of a scrupulous lover. "He has not seen her for four sunsets, and to-night she was to answer the question that Elskatawa put when he saw her last."

He thrust his hand beneath a bison-skin that hung against the wall of the lodge, and drew forth a large-bladed English-made knife which he concealed in his bosom. Then, parting the curtains, he left the structure and glided away toward the western suburbs of the town.

His changed appearance created no attention; whereas, had he been clad in the habiliments of enchantment, a howling crowd would have followed him, demanding the last communication from spirit-land.

A train of deep thoughts ran through the Prophet's brain as he advanced, and once or twice he paused and appeared anxious to turn back, but some resistless influence seemed to goad him on.

A coward at heart, but the meanest of traitors and sneak-thieves, was Elskatawa.

At last he halted before a tiny lodge, capable of lodging but a single person.

No light gleamed beyond the half-parted curtains, and the pale moonlight clothed it with a ghastliness that seemed to say "the place is haunted." Elskatawa stood before the door and glanced about him before he put forth his hand to clear his way to the interior.

Was he, the great Prophet of the confederated Indian tribes of the North-west, afraid to enter the smallest lodge in Tippecanoe, while the eye of a red-man was upon him? Even thus it seemed, for the step of a dog startled him, and he drew back until the night-prowling canine had passed by.

Then he crept into the lodge and stood upright over a couch revealed by the moonshine, which he allowed to steal into the apartment.

He had entered without disturbing the single occupant of the bed of skins, and suddenly the Prophet dropped on his knees, and bent over the face, pillowed on a wolf-skin bundle.

It was a beautiful face, as white as the lily, and as fair. A strand of golden hair lay across one cheek, and the ripe lips, parting in a dreamful smile, tempted the intruder; the light of adoration gleamed in his eye; but he held himself back. She could not have seen the frosts of her eighteenth winter, for she looked like a child, sleeping in the romantic

Shawano lodge; and that hers was a peaceful slumber the scrutinizing Indian knew.

He watched her for many minutes before he moved a muscle, and then his hand crept from beneath his long robe. It made a few passes over the beautiful face, upon which his eyes seemed to burn with the softness of twin stars, and a glistening sweat stood out on his temples. Presently the girl moved uneasily on the couch, and the faultless eye-lids parted feebly then closed again.

The *will* was at work, and the Indian never took his eyes from his victim's.

He worked with her *will* as perhaps he had never worked before, and at last a faint smile parted his clenched lips, as he heard her murmur his name.

"Elskatawa—father, I see a man."

"Tell me of him."

"He wears the dress of a Kickapoo; but I see beneath his paint. He has a white skin."

"A spy—go on, Snow-bird!"

"He walks rapidly through the forest. He is tall and comely—fairer than the pale-face who holds long talks with my father. He is crossing a creek in a beautiful glen. Now he stops and struggles in the water, as if some bad spirit was trying to drag him down."

"Go on!" commanded Elskatawa, for the first time excited.

"I can see him no more," she said. "The glen has fled, like the hawk. Now I see a mighty war-party marching up a wide river. A chief—a white-face—rides a snowy horse, and a flag covered with stars floats over the war-trail."

"It is the war-party of the governor!" said the Prophet, a pallor of fear coming back to his face.

"The sun is shining over the pale-faces, and their guns glisten like the cataracts of the little creek. Now they halt, for a man runs out of the wood, and beckons to the white-horsed chief. Snow-bird has seen the hunter before."

"What is he like?" asked Elskatawa.

"He is tall and his face is hairless. His left hand wears but three fingers."

"'Tis the child-stealer!" exclaimed the Prophet. "What is he doing now?"

"He rides beside the pale soldier; the warriors are on the trail again."

"Good! Elskatawa and the smooth-faced hunter will meet again," ejaculated the Prophet. "The dog that stole Omcme from the Shawnee village is marching to the knife of the Prophet that has been bared for him so long. Snow-bird, go back to the glen and tell me what you see. What has become of the man in the creek?"

Elskatawa had become strangely interested in the vision revealed youth.

"He is not in the glen," answered the girl, and her voice told the Prophet that his power was becoming exhausted. "I see a cataract, and beyond it a cave; the hunter lies there on the ground. A fair girl bends over him." A long pause and then: "I can see no more; the mist of the cataract blinds me."

Elskatawa started forward with eagerness: "Look again, Snow-bird! Tell me, is the girl in the cave a red one?"

"The mists—the blinding mists," said Snow-bird, persistently. "I see two forms, but they are shadows."

"Red or white?"

"There! I can see no more."

The girl opened her eyes and faintly murmured, "water."

Elskatawa supplied her, and watched her drink.

"I did not know my father was coming to the lodge to-night," she said, looking into the Indian's face with a smile. "I would not sleep when he is near."

It was plain that the girl retained no recollections of the events of the past few moments, and the Prophet playfully ran his fingers through her hair.

"Snow-bird has slept a long time," he said.

"Why did not my father waken me?" she asked. "Sleep should make the body strong; but I feel weak."

The revelations of the trance had drained her nervous system, and she looked like one who had been ill a long time.

"Poor, poor child!" murmured the Prophet, tenderly. "I had hoped to find you awake."

"Ah! father, you came to talk of *him*?"

"Yes."

"What does he give you for me?"

The words were clothed in a sarcasm that cut the Shawnee to the quick, and he tried to evade the interrogative.

"He pays me love, Snow-bird," he said.

"Can he love, father?"

"He can love as the dove loves its mate."

"Where is he now?"

"In his lodge."

"Will he fight the pale-faces?"

"Yes."

"I ought to love him, then," she said, musingly, "for the white soldiers oppress the red-man. Father, go and bring him to me."

Elskatawa sprung to his feet, and a moment later the lodge-lily was alone.

She fell back on the skins and closed her eyes.

Twenty minutes later the Prophet returned, accompanied by a handsome man of soldierly bearing. The English features, clear-cut and faultless, predominated, but there was a gleam in the dark eyes, and a lurking smile on the crimson lips, that proclaimed his nature.

Snow-bird rose to a sitting posture when the two shadows fell athwart her couch, and the white man knelt beside her.

"Here I am, Snow-bird," he said, in a tender voice; "Elskatawa found me asleep, dreaming of you."

"Of me?" she said, flattered by the oily tone, the cunning lie.

"I always dream of you, Snow-bird; but why would you see me when the stars kiss the Wabash?"

"Elskatawa, my father, says you have bought me of him with love, and that you will fight the pale-faces when they come. Now I will try to love you, Fair Face; here is my hand that I will."

He raised the white fingers to his lips and covered them with hot kisses.

"Mine at last!" he cried. "Monckton Howland has not lived in vain. But when may I call Snow-bird mine, and take her to my own lodge?"

"When Fair Face has met the governor's soldiers in battle."

His countenance fell; but he quickly replied:

"That day will come soon! I will meet the red-man's oppressors with the sword."

She smiled approvingly. Poor girl, she thought Monckton Howland loved her.

By and by the Prophet and the pale-face walked from the edge.

"Fair Face, Snow-bird saw before you came."

"Ah! Where wandered her eyes to-night?"

"To a glen, and she saw—Omeme!"

The Briton started, and turned abruptly upon the sorcerer.

"What?"

"She saw a girl," said Elskatawa, regretting his hasty words.

"Omeme?"

"No—a Kickapoo girl, talking to a white hunter."

The Englishman bit his lip and looked deeply into the eyes of the red deceiver.

It was evident that he did not believe the last sentence.

"She saw the governor trailing up the Wabash," continued the Prophet.

"Snow-bird is a wonderful girl, that she can see when she sleeps," said Howland. "She is mine now; I gave you much gold for her—twice as much as I gave Ossetoba for Omeme. I love your stolen niece, Elskatawa. I never can love Snow-bird, and let me tell you now that if you have deceived me—if Omeme is still alive, I will turn to her, and take from you every golden eagle I have paid for the white girl."

He uttered the last words on the threshold of his own lodge, and saw the Prophet walk away before he entered.

"Elskatawa knows now that Omeme lives behind the silver cascades; but Fair Face shall never see her. He must make Snow-bird his squaw. Now let the child-stealer come with the governor. Elskatawa's knife yearns for his blood, for Omeme was dear to him. But the Prophet will slay her before Fair Face kisses her lips. He has bought Snow-bird, and *she* must be his squaw!"

Thus spoke Elskatawa, the Shawnee Prophet.

CHAPTER IV.

ANOTHER CAPTIVE HUNTER.

WHEN Hiram Gleason, the crippled spy, darted from his couch to the rescue of Omeme, it was with uplifted rifle.

"Drop her, red-skin, or you are a dead man!" he shouted.

A derisive smile stole over the face of Tiger-Heart.

"Omeme b'long to Tiger-Heart!" he hissed, in broken English, and the next second he had bounded over the rock, and before the white man could meet the onslaught, the red fist had dashed him backward, and almost into the water.

Tiger-Heart's left hand encircled Omeme's arm while he attacked the spy, and after the brief conflict he turned full upon the girl.

"Omeme Tiger-Heart's once more," he said, in a voice of infinite triumph. "He make long trails after her; but find her not. By and by he dream of girl behind the silver water, and then he come to place. He saw trapper leave his home, and Tiger-Heart say 'Omeme there.' So he crawl down into hollow and find her."

The Indian girl listened calmly to his words, and then asked:

"Where Tiger-Heart's braves?"

"They follow trapper into forest."

A groan escaped her lips—a groan that drew a scowl to the Shawnee's face.

"Trapper love Omeme?" he said, but half interrogatively.

"Yes, and Omeme love Tawah," she said, boldly meeting the flashings of his dark eyes.

"Tiger-Heart alone now; but he will take Omeme to a place which the eye of the eagle can not penetrate."

"Then Tiger-Heart will not go to Tippecanoe?"

"No—Fair Face there."

"Does he fear the red-coated man?"

"He would seek Omeme again, and our fight might divide

the red-men who must be strong when the white governor comes. Would Omeme take any thing to her new lodge?"

"No."

"Then we ready to take the winding trail that leads to it," he said, and thrusting his hand into his medicine-bag he revealed a rope of deer-thongs, with which he proceeded with a gentleness that seemed foreign to his nature, to bind Omeme's hands before her.

The girl submitted without a murmur.

"Now Tiger-Heart 'tend to hunter who wanted his blood," he said, turning toward Hiram Gleason, who lay like one dead upon the sandstones, with the cold spray dashing its pearls over him.

The chief's right hand gripped a scalping-knife, and the light that lit up his dark eyes proclaimed his intention.

He had decreed that the spy's scalp should hang at his belt.

A quick step took him forward, and he was stooping to claim the prize when something touched his arm. A sudden start and withering look revealed Omeme standing at his side, with her captive hands resting on his buck-skin sleeve.

"If Tiger-Heart would have Omeme love him, he must not scalp the dead pale boy," she said, casting a look of pity upon the motionless spy—dead to all outward appearance. "The chief's arm dashed him to the stones, and they sent him upon the long trail. See! the bear-trap of Tawah tore his leg; but still he was brave enough to cross arms with Tiger-Heart. No, chief; do not scalp so brave a foe, but let him rest beside the silver water, and Omeme will love the Shawnee who can stay his hand."

The soft, silvery tone was irresistible, and glancing from the fair pleader to the spy, the chief slowly returned his knife to its wonted place.

He did not reply to Omeme's words; but lifted her from the ground as he turned away.

Clambering over the rocks, and scouting the rain of the cascade, he emerged upon the glen, sleeping quietly in the light of the stars.

"Omeme will walk," said the girl. "Her limbs are strong, and she can keep pace with Tiger Heart."

After a moment's thought the chief placed her on the ground, and a few minutes later the glen was deserted.

Tiger-Heart had found his Omeme after long trailings, and now his great scheme was to keep her from the eyes of Monckton Howland, the British soldier. Nor must Elskatawa discover that his niece still lived.

The Shawnee chief had Herculean tasks to perform; and the aim of our romance is to show how he performed them.

But let us return to the trapper whom we left pursuing his way through the forest, hoping to intercept Harrison on his march to Tippecanoe, during the coming day.

The dispatches which he bore from the scout were important ones, concerning the movements of certain southern Indians, and it was necessary that the general should be informed before the army reached hostile ground.

The trapper was not long in discovering that he was pursued by three savages, and he concluded to rid himself of the pests in the first stage of his expedition. Well learned in the artifices of pursuit, and being, perhaps, the most skillful woodsman of his day, he played for the destruction of his foes and won. Long before he emerged from the forest, three Indians lay dead therein, and Tiger Heart was destined to watch in vain for the return of his braves.

With a trio of scalps dangling at his belt, Silas Frost greeted the first flushes of morning, and at last beheld the army of border vengeance marching over the level country.

The sight threw new strength into his limbs, and presently standing on the banks of a creek, he saluted Governor Harrison, who reined in his white horse, and commanded the army to halt.

"A horse for the scout!" said the general, and presently Frost rode beside him at the head of the forces.

"If no Indians discover your home and butcher its inmates, I shall rejoice," said Harrison, when the trapper had communicated to him the events that had transpired in the glen. "Tiger-Heart, as my scouts tell me, is a formidable foe. He has more power over the Shawnees than Tecumseh, by whom he is hated. But as Tecumseh is not here now, he will rule, and, guided by his councils, the Indians will show fight."

"But there is the Prophet, gin'ral," ventured the trapper

"And a veritable coward at heart he is, too," was the reply. "I do not fear him. Were the war left to him, he would seek our camp, and sue for peace on his knees. But the fear of disgrace may stimulate him to a stand; but he will never risk his life in battle. I know the man, for I have studied him."

"Well an' good, gin'ral. He'll fill the Injuns with lies an' promises from the Great Spirit, an' they'll fight like devils no doubt. But if Tiger-Heart can be fixed before we reach Tippecanoe—"

"I've given my scouts special orders concerning him," returned Harrison. "His death may prevent a terrible effusion of blood."

"If Si Frost meets 'im, gin'ral, you may not hev to fight the Injuns at Tippecanoe."

Harrison smiled at the determination that clothed the trapper's words, and put forth his ungloved hand.

A hearty pressure followed between the steeds, and for several moments the twain advanced in silence.

Suddenly Major Daviess, commander of the Kentucky dragoons, saluted Harrison, and guided his steed alongside.

"Corporal Howe wishes to converse with our newly arrived scout," said the cavalryman, glancing at Silas Frost.

"Corp'ral Howe?" echoed the trapper, puzzled, returning Daviess' glance with a look. "Where is he?"

"Among the dragoons, in the rear," was the reply. "Ask for him when you get back there."

"I'll go an' see the corp'ral," said Frost, and with a salute which drew smiles to the officers' lips, he wheeled his bay, and rode slowly toward the rear of the command.

The commander of the dragoons, Major Daviess, was a talented Kentuckian, and his men were, with but few exceptions, men of culture. The exceptions were unlettered, but good-natured Indian-fighters, who knew the foe they were marching against. Alas! for the gallant Daviess! four days later he fell at the head of his daring spirits, and the youthful commonwealth of Kentucky mourned thirty days for her son.

"Whar's Corp'ral Howe?" asked Si Frost, glancing over the dragoons as he drew rein beside them.

"Here," answered a clear voice, and the speaker, who rode at the edge of the detachment, motioned the trapper to approach.

Corporal Howe was a young soldier about twenty-two years of age, and his tanned face proclaimed rough usage by a prairie sun. But there was a bright sparkle in his eye, and his dragoon hat was thrown back far enough to reveal a high, intellectual forehead.

The trapper rode alongside, and took the hand that the young Kentuckian extended.

"I am happy to meet you," said Howe, "and my only wonder is that we have never met before. Were you ever in Kentucky?"

"But once—eleven year ago this fall, I think."

"Where were you sixteen years ago?" asked the soldier, with growing interest.

"Harrison an' I war helpin' Mad Anthony whip the Injuns on the Maumee," was the reply, and the speaker glanced with pride at the governor.

Corporal Howe smiled faintly, and a moment later said:

"I suppose you are wondering why I put so strange a question. I will tell you; but I must not talk loud for the Blue Lick boys will laugh at me. I guess they already think me crazy, for the question which I have just asked you I have asked a thousand men within the last ten years. Now before proceeding further, let me ask you another."

"Well, drive ahead, corp'ral. If Si Frost kin answer it he'll do it."

"It is this," said Howe, waiting with a devouring impatience until the trapper had entirely ceased. "Do you know of any white girl who is a captive among the Shawnees?"

Silas Frost's gaze dropped thoughtfully to the ground, and the soldier regarded him without a wink.

"I guess I do not," said the trapper at last, slowly, looking up. "I war thinkin' of the one they had eight year ago; but *she* war killed on the Miami while trying to make her escape."

"Killed?" ejaculated Howe. "Did you ever see her?"

"Fifty times I should reckon."

"Had she blonde hair?" and the lips that breathed the words trembled with fear and anxiety.

"I don't know what kind o' color you call blonde," said Frost; "but this gal's hair was black as ink, and her eyes likewise."

A sigh of relief broke from the soldier's heart.

"Thank heaven, she was not Florence!" he exclaimed.

"Oh, you've got a gal somewhar, have you?" exclaimed the trapper. "Wal, I thought you war drivin' at that."

"I will tell you, Silas Frost," said Howe, calmly, and he leaned nearer the trapper. "Sixteen years ago the Shawnee Indians dug up the tomahawk along the Licking, and among the victims of their deviltry was the family of John Chalmers. They butchered every member save one, a little girl about sixteen months old. She was carried into the woods, and that is the last ever heard of her. I was five years old at the time; but recollect that bloody iconoclast, with a vividness that astonishes me. Even then, young as I was, I swore that I would hunt for little Florence Chalmers, and for ten years I have kept my oath."

"An' in all that time hev'n't you found hide nor hair ov her?" asked the trapper.

"I have discovered nothing satisfactory. A thousand times I have thought myself on the right trail; but as many times have I been deceived. Yesterday, however, Winnemac, the governor's Winnebago scout, imparted strange intelligence which has rekindled the fire of hope in my bosom."

"Wal, what did the Injun say?"

"He said that Elskatawa keeps a beautiful white girl in close confinement at Tippecanoe. Do you believe it?"

The question was quite direct, and the trapper glanced at the Winnebago scout who rode beside a captain of dragoons not far away.

"I never heard of such a gal," he said; "but take Winnemac's word before mine, corp'ral, for he has been to Tippecanoe, and the gov'nor has told me that the Injun never lies."

"I thank you, Silas Frost," said Howe, "and I pray that the Prophet's captive is Florence Chalmers."

"Ef I ever did any prayin', corp'ral, I'd pray that way, too; but I *hope* she's the gal you're lookin' for."

CHAPTER V.

TAKING A PRISONER.

"You will see the end of this campaign with the rest of us, I suppose?"

The speaker, Corporal Howe, addressed Silas Frost, who had been a long time silent.

"I don't know," was the thoughtful reply. "I've got some folks down to the twin falls, who ought to be looked after—a young scout and—," he paused, glanced about them, and then finished in an undertone, "and a gal—an Injun gal."

The dragoon smiled.

"So you've taken a wife from the dusky tribes?" he said, half interrogatively.

"Well, no, not jest yet," answered the trapper; "but she mought be my wife arter awhile. I promised 'em that I would come back as soon as I saw Harrison, an' I should be on the back trail now. The gov'nor wants me to go with 'im to Tippecanoe, an' I think sometimes that I oughter go, fur we helped Wayne whip the Injuns, on the Maumee, in ninety four."

"I would advise you to accompany us," said Howe, earnestly. "The general knows your value, and cannot do without you. I have been thinking about entering Elskatawa's town in advance of the army, and discover all I can about Winnemac's volunteered information."

"And wouldn't I like to go with you?" exclaimed the trapper, his eyes lighting up with enthusiasm. "Elskatawa and I hev' a little difficulty to settle, an' ef I'd go back to Gleason now, I might miss the battle."

"That you would. I assure you, Frost, that the scout and your girl can take care of themselves."

"He's crippled, but not badly," said the trapper, and then his head dropped in deep thought.

The soldier eyed him anxiously, hoping that he would do

cide upon accompanying the army to the termination of the present campaign.

At last the trapper lifted his head.

"I'm going with you," he said, looking at the dragoon. "I've got a curiosity to know somethin' about Elskatawa's gul."

"Thank heaven, that you are not going to turn back!" exclaimed the soldier, putting forth his hand, which the trapper grasped fervently. "We will stick together!"

"That we will, corp'ral," and Frost gazed steadily into the ranger's eyes. "I'm beginnin' to like you, and when Si Frost takes a likin' for a fellar he never goes back on 'im -- never!"

The general was overjoyed to hear that the trapper had decided to remain with the command, and when the shades of night began to deepen about the advance, he called the old trapper, Corporal Howe and Winnemac, the Winnebago, to his side.

"I deem it necessary that a prisoner should be brought in to the camp before dawn," he said. "From a savage we might learn much concerning the Prophet's intentions, and I know that captives taken during the advance of Wayne's army contributed to the success of the Maumee campaign."

"I b'lieve, gin'ral, that the dusky hounds are followin' us through the woods yon ter," said the trapper, pointing to the west, where stretched a belt of timber, now hidden by the shades of night. "Now look hyar. I propose this: We will skirt the prairie to the woods, an' ef we find that the infernal Injun spies are in the grass watchin' the camp, as they are by this time, ef thar be any followin' us at all, one o' us will come back, and you kin set the prairie-grass afire. The wind is blowin' kind o' smartly toward the trees, now, and as the devils run into the brush we'll catch our man."

Elias Frost's proposition was favorably viewed by Harrison and his aids, and presently, well mounted on horses, the trio of intrepid men glided away.

The place selected for the bivouac of the army was near the banks of the Wabash and at the edge of an extensive prairie, bordered on the further side, as I have intimated, by a forest. A small creek which afforded water for the soldiery, meandered through the encampment, but across this the

fire could leap with ease, and push on toward the trees, with its almost proverbial vengeance.

After riding down the Wabash for several miles, the termination of the prairie was reached, and the three Indian-hunters turned their horses' heads to the west.

Not a word had been spoken since their departure from camp, and the forest trees were gained before a human voice broke the silence.

"We'll leave the horses here," said Silas Frost, in a low tone, and the steeds were left in charge of Winnemac.

Off into the starlight which had now settled down upon wood and plain glided the white scouts, while the Winnebago waited for the signal which had been agreed upon.

For an hour he stood like a statue at the grouped heads; but the hoot of an owl suddenly transformed him into life.

He did not wait to hear the signal repeated, but sprung upon the back of one of the horses and galloped away toward the camp. The other horses followed him.

A few seconds after Winnemac's departure, a dark figure approached the halting-place, and examined the ground in the light of the stars. The stealthy movements, the glittering knife, clutched in a sinewy hand, and the scalp-lock that crowned an otherwise bald head, proclaimed the person an Indian. That he was displeased with the results of his examination his muttered sentences attested, and as noiselessly and ghost-like as he had crept from the tall dry grass, so he disappeared among it again.

Perhaps he went to tell his comrades that the pale-faced scouts were abroad; but, if they were still abroad, where were they?

Crouched at the edge of the forest several hundred yards above the spot visited by the spying red-man, Silas Frost and Corporal Howe awaited the issue of events.

Shortly after leaving Winnemac, they had come together at the spot they now occupied.

In the lowest of whispers, the trapper was talking to the young dragoon.

"You are certain that he wore three feathers on his head?"

"I am. So near was I to him that I could see that one feather was broken near the top."

"It must hev been Tiger-Heart," responded the trapper "I'd give my life almost to capture that devil to-night. I've been watchin' for him for five years, an' now—"

"Look!" interrupted Howe, clutching the speaker's arm. "Harrison and Winnemac have met!"

"They hev, by hokey!" ejaculated Frost, rising to his feet, "an' the wind is risin' like an unchained eagle."

Sure enough, afar to the east, the prairie was on fire, and the wind was driving the flames toward the forest with a vengeance truly grand and terrific.

With satisfied smiles on their faces, but in silence, the scouts watched the progress of the crimson flame, and all at once several dark objects sprung from the grass.

"Look! look!" exclaimed Howe; "the Prophet's spies are being burned out. Now, Frost, we must prepare to take our prisoner."

Slowly the spies withdrew into the wood, and ensconced themselves behind two gigantic oaks which grew side by side, and would shelter them from the fire.

"He might not come our way," said Frost, fearfully.

"Perhaps not; but he entered the prairie at this point," was the corporal's reply. "Tiger-Heart is the thunderbolt of this war, and I regret now that I did not attack him. I might have taken him."

"He would have finished you in a minute, corp'ral," said Frost. "Samson would hev been floored hed *he* been among the Philistines. I've crossed arms with the red devil, an' I know what he kin do."

While they talked, nearer and nearer came the flames, but now, strange to say, not an Indian could be seen.

This nettled the scouts.

"The hounds are pullin' grass themseleves," said Frost. "Look! didn't I tell ye so?"

A new fire was leaping among the long brittle blades far in advance of the main sea of flame, and the scouts looked into each other's faces, sorely disappointed.

"Must we watch here till daylight before we kin catch an Injun?" exclaimed the trapper, petulantly. "Hyar, Howe you watch by the tree, an' I'll go an' bring a greaser in, dead or alive."

"You're getting foolish, Silas Frost," returned the young soldier, putting his hand on the trapper's arm. "I tell you we'll fare better by remaining where we are. Come out of the light. Some red-skin might see you, and give you an arrow. The new fire—"

The cutting whiz of a barbed shaft broke the soldier's sentence, and a second later the trapper staggered back, and with a groan, sunk at the foot of the twin trees.

"He's paid for his folly," hissed Howe, stooping over the prostrate man; but the next moment he was startled to hear the trapper say in quick strong tones:

"Git up, corp'ral, an' watch fur the red devil. I ain't hurt a bit. When he comes fur my scalp, jump 'im. I'll help ye."

With the promptness which had gained him fame as a scout, Corporal Howe rose to his feet and stepped back into the shade of the trees.

Suddenly the snapping of a twig put every sense and nerve keenly on the alert, and the soldier saw the savage gliding toward the coveted scalp. Silas Frost's body was partially revealed by the light, and toward it the scalper came, sure of his prize.

It was evident that he knew nothing of the proximity of the younger scout, and when he stooped over the trapper, the weight of the Kentuckian fell upon him.

With an ejaculation of surprise, the Indian went to the earth, from which he made a desperate effort to rise, and struggled like a giant in the clutches of the scouts.

His struggles were vain efforts for freedom, but not until strong cords encircled his wrists did he yield.

Then he rose to his feet, and the scouts for the first time beheld the features of their captive.

Silas Frost was the first to speak.

"Tiger-Heart, by my soul!" he exclaimed, looking into the flashing eyes before him.

"What?" ejaculated Corporal Howe, "is this Tiger-Heart, the Shawnee?"

"Yes, corp'ral," and the trapper turned upon the giant chief again. "Wal, Tiger-Heart, we hev'n't been so near each other fur five years."

His voice was clothed in triumph.

The chief was silent.

"Five years hev'n't changed you much, chief," continued the trapper, "although they hev given you some crows' feet. By my eyes! I think you hev grown a foot or more. Whar's the gal—Omeme? Hev'n't found 'er yet, I s'pose?"

The last words were tauntingly spoken, and a strange light flashed in the Shawnee's eyes.

"Omeme," he murmured, in a low tone, but the scout's ears caught the name.

"Wal, I've got ye to talkin' at last!" exclaimed the trapper. "Know any thin' 'bout the gal, eh?"

"Tiger-Heart will talk to the governor," was the reply of the captive. "When he has talked with the Shawnee, the trapper can open his mouth."

"Then you'll see Harrison mighty quick," said Frost. "Tiger-Heart, ef I thought old Billy war goin' to set you free, I don't know but what we'd go back an' swear that we couldn't catch a red-skin."

All at once the chief drew his form to its true stature and looked at the trapper.

"Here is Tiger-Heart's bosom," he said, proudly, "and the hunter's knife is keen. Let him strike, and the bird will never return to its nest."

At these words, Silas Frost, whose right hand toyed with the hilt of his knife, started forward.

"What do you mean by the bird never coming back to its nest?" he cried, laying his hand on the tawny arm.

"Tiger-Heart's words never have two meanings!" was the reply.

"Have you found Omeme?"

"Would Tiger-Heart be here if he had found the scarlet maid?"

"I don't know; you Injuns will do any thing. But we'll go to the camp now."

A few minutes later the spot was deserted, and about midnight Governor Harrison and the thunderbolt of the Tippecanoe war stood face to face.

From the side of "the veteran of '94," Silas Frost glared at the chief.

"I oughtn't go further with the army," he muttered "That devil has been to the cascades; I feel it in my heart His slick words can't pull the wool over Si Frost's eyes!"

At that moment Corporal Howe stepped to his side.

"Corp'ral," he said, firmly, "I'm goin' back to the cave this very night, an' I don't want you to say a single word ag'in' it. Bloody doin's hev been goin' on down thar, an' thar is right where Si Frost ought to be!"

CHAPTER VI.

THE CAVERN AGAIN INVADED.

For a long time after Tiger-Heart's departure from the cascade cave with his beautiful red prisoner, the form of the border scout lay motionless at the edge of the water.

His face wore the color of a corpse, and the faint fire-light that fell upon the spot where he lay, added a repulsive ghastliness to the scene. When at last he did awake to consciousness and the reality of his situation, he crawled, for he could not walk erect, to the fire, and there recalled the events which had lately transpired. Again he saw the hideous face of Tiger-Heart peep over the rock, and then followed, in his fertile imagination, the iron blow that stretched him upon the rocks.

But he looked ahead and saw more. He saw the Shawnee bearing Omeme through the forest to a fate of whose horrors he shuddered to think, and twice he started forward for vengeance, but his wounded limb forced him down to the couch again; then he cursed the hidden bear-trap and his ill luck. He dried his damp clothes by the fire, and, wearied at length, sleep came to his eyes.

All through the long night he slumbered, and when he awoke it was to discover that day had revisited the earth.

He examined his wound and a smile of satisfaction came to his lips.

"If I rest my leg to day," he said, "I can get about on it

to-morrow. Frost will come back to-night, and what will he say when he discovers the girl missing? She was right when she said that Tiger-Heart would come. Now I wonder where he has taken her; not to the Prophet's town, because the British soldier is there, and the Indian will keep the girl for himself. I know the Indian's character; the treachery of the Shawnee I am acquainted with."

He saw the light grow stronger, and gradually fade away.

Then night settled down upon the glen again, and impatiently he waited for Silas Frost. Something told him that the trapper would return that night, and he trusted implicitly in the silent monitor; but while he watched, the soldier of '94 was far away, watching at the edge of a burning prairie for Tiger-Heart.

About the beginning of the fourth hour after darkness, the hoot of an owl penetrated the cavern.

Hiram Gleason started.

"Silas is coming back!" he whispered, with eagerness, "and he is signaling Omeme to see whether every thing is right here. I'll answer the call, and when he comes I can tell him all—I can undeceive him then."

Gun in hand, he made his way to the edge of the cascade, and counterfeited the hoot of the owl.

A long silence followed his call, and then the owl-cry, twice repeated and nearer than the first, greeted his ears.

He answered again, and then, for the first time, a suspicion of danger penetrated his brain.

"It may not be Silas after all," he said, communing with himself, and he tried to pierce the starlight that rested in the glen. "If the owl cries again I will not answer him. If it

 Silas he will come now without further signals."

Then, for several minutes longer, he crouched by the rocks, and turned his back upon the glen, to re-enter his retreat. As he did so, the figure of a savage made its appearance, and like a leopard crawled after him.

That the Indian was not alone, the appearance of a second tufted head clearly proved, and a pair of fiery eyes watched the movements of red and white.

The scout was totally unconscious of his danger, nor did he discover it until he turned to throw himself upon the soft

skins, when the giant, half-naked and hideously painted, burst upon his vision, and before he could bring his rifle to a level the long red arms shot forward, and the weapon was wrenched from his grasp.

"Pale-face never use weapon on Shawnee," said the Indian, with the faintest glow of triumph, and then a sharp, peculiar cry sprung from his lips.

Instantly it was answered, and three dark forms came forward.

"Muddy Brook, the Kickapoo, promised to meet Oagla and his braves here to-night," continued the first Indian, whose dress proclaimed him a chief.

"Oagla come and call for Muddy Brook; but the pale-face answer him. How long he been here, and what ail leg?"

The scout answered evasively.

"This hunter's cave, then?"

"Yes, this is my home. I live here alone."

The savages appeared satisfied, and after a brief examination of the interior of the cavern, prepared to depart with their captive.

"Where are you going?" he asked.

"Goin' to wait for Muddy Brook," was the reply, and a few moments later the cave was tenantless.

The Shawnees were pleased with their unexpected capture, and assured the scout that ere long he should stand face to face with Elskatawa, their Prophet.

"I may be able to render Harrison valuable assistance if they take me to Tippecanoe," he thought, while the savages waited for the Kickapoo who did not redeem his appointment until after midnight.

Muddy Brook was a dwarfish chief whose head-dress of drooping heron-feathers almost touched the heels of his moccasins, and he burst into a fit of demoniac laughter when his eyes fell upon the scout.

He sprung forward with out-stretched hands and shook our hero until he looked pleadingly to Oagla for deliverance.

The Shawnee interfered and the dwarf, whose strength was prodigious, reluctantly released his victim.

"Oagla and Muddy Brook must talk now," said the Shawnee, and then he addressed the scout in the Kickapoo tongue.

Gleason shook his head, and told Oagla in his own idiom that Kickapoo was unintelligible to him.

While three savages guarded him, the two chiefs retired a pace and seated themselves upon a rock. The scout appeared indifferent to their conversation, and once or twice exchanged words with the Indians who guarded him.

"Tiger-Heart find girl yet?" asked Oagla of his Kickapoo brother.

"Tiger-Heart got Red Rose at last," he said, slowly.

Oagla seized the dwarf's hand.

"Fair Face reward Muddy Brook," he said. "But how does the chief know all this?"

"Last night Muddy Brook was on the trail alone," answered the Kickapoo, "and among the leaves he heard a foot-step. He listened. Was it the soft foot of the panther? No. The moccasins of Tiger-Heart broke the forest sticks, and Muddy Brook saw him pass by."

"Was the chief alone?"

"No; the Red Rose was with him. He carried her in his arms. Muddy Brook followed, and Tiger-Heart knew it not; he walked up the river, and among the big bluffs the Kickapoo trailer lost him."

Oagla frowned and glared angrily at the dwarf.

"Was Muddy Brook blind that he allowed Tiger-Heart to deceive him?"

The Kickapoo smiled and laid his hand emphatically on the Shawnee's shoulder.

"For thirty snows," he said, "no man has deceived Muddy Brook on the trail. He never lost Tiger-Heart until he saw him lay Omeme down and tell her that she was safe."

Oagla's eyes flashed for joy.

"Aha! good for Muddy Brook!" he cried. "Oagla is hunting Omeme for the red-coat. Now let the Kickapoo tell him where she is."

"How much Oagla give?" asked the dwarf, with a strange smile.

Oagla lifted the Kickapoo's hands and counted his fingers twice.

"So many shining pieces," he said, but Muddy Brook shook his plumes.

"Fair Face, as you call him, give more," he said, with a white man's avariciousness. "Muddy Brook go to Tippecanoe, and talk with 'im face to face."

"Could the Kickapoo walk straight to Omeme's new lodge?" asked Oagla

"Yes."

"He will not go for what Oagla has counted on his
ids?"

No!"

"Fair Face will not give him as much."

"Muddy Brook is going to Tippecanoe!" was the stubborn rejoinder.

Simultaneously both Indians rose to their feet, and Oagla clutched his tomahawk.

"When does Muddy Brook seek Tippecanoe?" he asked.

"To-night!" he answered.

The brief words still quivered on the speaker's lips when Oagla, with uplifted Tomahawk, sprung upon him.

But the dwarf nimbly avoided the blow, and quick as lightning, snatched the hatchet from its maddened chief's hand.

"Muddy Brook is going to Tippecanoe to-night," he reiterated, flashing triumph upon his enemy. "Two trails lead to Fair Face's lodge, and may the Great Spirit smile on the Indian who reaches it first. Oagla and Muddy Brook will meet again."

While he spoke, the Shawnee was silent, quivering over the Kickapoo's victory, and he saw Muddy Brook fling his tomahawk into the stream, and bound away before he moved.

Then he sprung to the long-barreled rifle that leaned against the rock, and leveled it at the agile form.

A moment thus, and then a jet of fire leaped from the bore.

A yell answered the report, and then came a heavy plash in the water.

"Oagla can shoot when the stars shine," said the Shawnee, proudly, turning toward his braves, and the man they guarded. "Muddy Brook will never get Fair Face's gold for Omeme."

He paused before the startled group, and calmly reloaded his rifle.

"Shawnees, up!" he cried to the recumbent braves. "To the lodges of Tippecanoe!"

Hiram Gleason rose without assistance, and the Indians hurried him from the glen.

Tippecanoe, the theater of coming events, was now his destination; but the eagerness to reach it which he had evinced a few minutes before, had entirely disappeared.

He had thought to render Harrison assistance from the Prophet's town; but now he thought of the captive of the Kickapoo bluffs.

For he had listened to the conversation between Oagla and Muddy Brook, and the Kickapoo language to him was as intelligible as the Shawnee, which he could talk like a native.

CHAPTER VII.

THE BLOODY TRAIL.

Despite the entreaties of Harrison, who did not wish to lose a valuable assistant on the eve of battle, Silas Frost left the encampment after midnight, and, well mounted, dashed down the Wabash.

"Good or bad news, I will be with you ag'n in three days," were his parting words to the backwoods governor, and to Howe he said:

"Ef I don't meet you in the woods, I will stumble ag'n you at Tippecanoe."

"There goes the bravest spirit on the Wabash," said Harrison, looking at the trapper gradually disappearing among the flickering camp-fires. "I can ill afford to lose him; but he will not be absent long. Corporal, his departure disarranges your plans, does it not?"

The last sentence was addressed to the youthful Kentuckian.

"Not materially, general," was the reply. "Winnemac

and myself are going to the Prophet's town, to-morrow night. With my mission thither I have already acquainted you."

"Yes," answered Harrison, "and my curiosity has become so excited over it, that I have been interrogating the Winnebago."

"And what did the Indian say?"

"He reiterated his declarations to you."

"Do you credit them, general?"

"I am inclined to."

"If the Shawnee's captive is the long-lost Florence Chalmers, I will deprive him of her."

"Let me counsel you here, corporal," said Harrison with his serious warlike air, "to do nothing rash. If the Indians sue for peace before Lattle, of course you will obtain peaceable possession of the girl, and a rash act on your part, in the village, may cost you your own life, and the lives of many of my men."

"Believe me, general, I will keep within the bounds of propriety," was the soldier's reply. "But Tiger-Heart what will you do with him?"

"I will hold him captive until the savages come to some conclusion. With him in my power, I entertain hopes of a peaceable settlement of these difficulties. His influence with the Wyandots and Ottawas is unbounded, and if I threaten him with death, those nations will not fight. I am confident of this."

William Henry Harrison knew the Indian character and counted on certainties. His prisoner sat in a canvas tent bound and well guarded. Ever and anon the sentries would make sure of his presence by peering into the semi-gloom.

The dark form on the ground never moved, and the sentinel wondered how the chief could sleep with an unknown face impending over his head. Harrison knew the cunning of the sachem, and realized his worth as a prisoner of war; therefore his anxiety led him to the prison an hour before day.

"Well, how is your prisoner?" he asked of the sentry who stood at the door of the well-guarded structure.

"He is yet with us, general," was the reply, and he stepped aside to allow Harrison to investigate the truth of the statement.

"He's crouched on the floor yet, I guess; he hasn't budged a peg since we put him in."

Harrison pulled the flap aside, and in the starlight beheld a dark figure in the center of the tent. He gazed upon it for a moment, when he stepped forward and touched it with his hand. It did not move, and a slight push sent it to the ground.

Then the truth burst upon the governor's mind. Tiger-Heart had escaped!

A moment later, calm and collected to all outward appearances, the commander faced the guards.

"It's onpossible, general," exclaimed a giant Kentuckian. "The smartest Injun in the territory couldn't crawl away beneath my nose 'ithout me knowin' it."

"Well, Tiger-Heart is gone!"

The sentries would not believe it until the tent had undergone a thorough examination.

Harrison did not arouse the camp. He put four experienced bordermen on the trail, and then returned to his quarters.

Daylight came, but no Tiger-Heart returned with it.

Great indignation reigned throughout the camp when it was known that the thunderbolt of the Tippecanoe campaign had escaped. Threats of personal violence were raised against the guards; but the general, who trusted implicitly in his men, soon quieted them, and the army prepared to resume its march.

Now that Tiger-Heart was at large, war—war to the knife might be expected.

Let us now return to Silas Frost.

He rode rapidly down the left bank of the Wabash, and at last, in the first gray streaks of dawn, drew rein in the little glen that had sheltered him for years.

The silence of death brooded over the place, and with a serious countenance he entered the cavern.

The fire had dwindled down to live coals, and a smoking stick or two; but the place was tenantless.

"I'm not one whit disappointed," he said, surveying the scene. "I prepared myself for such a sight while ridin' down the river. The gal is gone at last, an' the boy has followed her, no doubt."

Then a careful examination of the interior of the cavern succeeded.

The struggle at the rock upon which the fatal arrow had lain, the capture of the scout, were revealed to the cunning man, and after bending over the only moccasin-track discoverable about the premises a smile came to his lips.

"I knew it," he said, rising to his feet. "Tiger-Heart, you meant Omeme when you said that the bird might never come back to the nest. I wish I had choked you last night until you had blurted out her fate. What have you done with the gal?" and the anger of the trapper's nature leaped to his fiery eyes. "I'm goin' to hunt you now, as I'd hunt a venison-stealing wolf. I will never spare you when we meet agin, an' I'll take the gal from you alive ef I kin, dead ef I must."

Save the footprint on the sand near the rocks, Tiger-Heart had left no memorials of his visit. Without the cavern not even the faintest trace of a trail was discernible. For the first time in his life, Silas Frost was at fault—baffled utterly.

He left the horse in the cavern, and sought for the trail in the glen.

Daylight was not yet far advanced, but he did not care for that. His quick sight was not at fault. Suddenly he paused and stared at a little pool of blood into which he had almost placed his foot!

Blood beside the stream that flowed through the glen, was enough to startle the trapper.

"Somethin's crawled out o' the water hyar," he said, looking at the bloody marks on the muddy bank. "P'raps some beaver got out o' my traps; no, my traps ar' all in ther cave. Injun blood, by hokey!"

With the exclamation on his lips he had leaped the stream, quite narrow at that point, and his eyes were sweeping the crimson trail that led to the perpendicular cliffs not many feet away.

"Injun blood; I know it!" and the next moment he was following the trail.

It was quite evident to the trapper's practiced eye that the wounded man, whoever he was, had dragged himself over

the ground with painful difficulty, and an upward glance told him whither he had gone.

I have already mentioned the existence of a narrow causeway running from the foot of the cliffs through solid rock to the forest above. To this day the gloomy place exists—a corridor scarce three feet in width, probably fifty in depth, the abode of serpents and lizards, and the dark garden-spot of beautiful ferns. From the bottom of the cliffs to the wood, the ascent is gradual, but very toilsome.

Toward this causeway—called to-day the “Devil’s Foot-path”—the trail of blood led the trapper, and he was not surprised to see it lose itself in the gloom.

“I wonder if the devil crept through,” he asked himself after listening and looking at the mouth of the causeway, and to answer the interrogative he hurried around the cliffs to the forest above.

The ground at the upper opening had not been disturbed save by the prowling coon, and Silas Frost concluded that the trail-maker lay somewhere in the gloom of the cleft.

“I’m goin’ to see who he is,” he said, with determination, and the next minute, armed solely with his knife, he disappeared from the beams of day.

It was a hazardous undertaking; but the hunter was not to be daunted by peril.

Slowly down the corridor he crept, with ears on the alert, for his eyes rendered but little service; nor did he pause until a knife-blade shot athwart his sight and snapped against the sand-stone wall!

The almost deadly blow was the first intimation that he had of a living enemy in the cimmerian gloom.

The shivering of the knife against the stone was followed by a curse of rage, and the next moment Silas Frost gripped a struggling human being!

But whether Indian or white man he could not tell, for the unseen lips were dumb.

“Why, its nothin’ but a boy!” ejaculated the trapper, surprised at the weight of his foe as he lifted him from the rocks, and started down the causeway.

In the light, at the edge of the tunnel, he looked at his

prize. It was an Indian dwarf covered from head to foot with his own blood!

"I've see'd you afore, you greasy whelp," Frost exclaimed, holding the red-man at arm's length. "What's yer handle, an' how did you get so infernal bloody? Aba! I see a bullet under the arm!"

"Muddy Brook shot by Oagla the Shawnee," said the dwarf.

"What did he do that fur?"

The Indian met the natural interrogative with another.

"Is the Kickapoo on the long trail?"

"Yes," answered Frost, laying his burden down on the stones. "I'm surprised that you hev held out so long. Before the sunlight drops into this place, Muddy Brook will hunt the Manitou's deer."

"White man speak truth?"

"I never lie to dyin' men. Hev you got any thin' to tell me? You know suthin' about the gal. Tell me Muddy Brook, an' I'll bury you where the wolves will never find you."

"Will the hunter do more than this?"

The voice was growing weaker.

"Yes. I know what you want. I'll kill the Injun that shot you. I swear, Muddy Brook, that I'll throw his scalp on your grave."

The light of vengeful satisfaction danced in the Indian's eyes and he whispered:

"Tiger-Heart has hidden Omeme among the big rocks up the water. In the cave where lies the thorny tree the hunter will find the red star."

The effort that framed the two sentences exhausted the Kickapoo, and he looked up into the hunter's eyes too far gone to speak further.

"Thank you, Muddy Brook," said Frost. "I know whar the place is, an' I'll do all that I hev promised to. The wolf shall hunt in vain for the little Kickapoo."

The gory face of Muddy Brook smiled the gratitude of his heart, and in silence the hunter watched the painless flickering of the fire of life.

At last he rose to his feet.

The dwarf was dead! And Tiger-Heart was free.

CHAPTER VIII.

A SPY IN THE TOILS.

THE night of the fifth of November hovered clear and cool over the Indian town of Tippecanoe.

Runners were constantly arriving with intelligence of Harrison's approach, and the savage heart was excited to an unusual degree. It was patent to the shrewder red-men that Elskatawa, at heart, was anxious for peace without the arbitrament of battle; but the fear of his more warlike brother, and of being called a peace man, by the confederate nations, made his voice loud for war—war to the bitter end.

To each and every runner that came from the seat of war a certain question was put.

"Where is Tiger-Heart?"

Some had noticed him on the prairie the preceding night, and many were inclined to think that the chief had perished in the flames. But such belief was in a great measure dissipated by a Miami runner who declared that he had seen the missing man on the Wabash since the conflagration.

"Tiger-Heart will be here in time if he lives. His voice will never be for peace, nor is he the man to desert the tribes on the eve of battle. I know him; I hate him."

These words fell from the lips of a white man who walked from a group of excited young braves. He wore the flashy uniform of a British officer, and he looked like a man born to command.

"I'll go and hunt the Prophet up now," he continued. "I never saw Indians so excited in all my life; they'll spoil the whole thing if they do not cool down. Old Elskatawa, craven at heart that he is, can not master them, and Tecumseh and Tiger-Heart are absent. If my heart was in their cause, I'd take the thing in hand and from chaos I'd bring order—order that would startle Harrison when he reached Tippecanoe. Ha! what have we here? By the king's soul! Elskatawa

has given o'er his mummeries, and is listening to the latest runner."

With his eye fastened upon a small group of Indians, Monckton Howland turned to the right and presently stood at the Prophet's side.

"Listen," said Elskatawa touching his shoulder; "the Delaware is telling about the big white chief."

The British soldier glanced at the tall young runner who with voluble tongue, was enumerating the forces of the governor, and describing the line of march.

"Why does Elskatawa listen to such stories when there is one who sees when she sleeps, and who can tell him more than all the spies on the Wabash?"

"Aha! Elskatawa had forgotten that!" said the Prophet, with a start. "Come, Fair Face, we will hear Snow-bird's lips tell us of the pale thunderbolt's march up to this moment."

"Yes, yes," said Howland, eagerly. "I will listen to the girl while Oagla is still absent."

"Is the tall Shawnee trailing for Fair Face?" asked Elskatawa looking at his companion.

"He hunts the long-lost trail for me!"

"Omeme's trail?"

"Yes."

"He will never find it; Elskatawa's niece is in the star-lands."

"I will never believe it."

"Elskatawa has believed it long."

The Indian was looking away while he spoke, and the strange smile that toyed with his thin lips gave the lie direct to his words.

He did not tell the British soldier that his spies had hunted long, and were still hunting for Omeme.

During the conversation the twain walked leisurely through the village, and at length the Prophet stood before the lodge.

"Fair Face will watch while Elskatawa puts Snow-bird into the sleep of the spirits," said the Indian as he gently parted the curtains and crossed the threshold.

He found the girl asleep on the couch of soft skins, and in a few moments made her subservient to the will.

Then his low "come, Fair Face," caused the Englishman to enter the lodge, and he dropped beside the couch and Elskatawa.

There in the semi-gloom, they sat and peered into the beautiful face resting upon the coon-skin robe, dreaming not, in the silence, that dilated eyes regarded them—eyes that fell upon Snow-bird for the first time!

Crouched like some gaunt mastiff in the darkest shadow of the lodge, the figure of an Indian revealed itself. The face was pressed against the structure, telling, in the pressure, that the eyes fell upon the interior.

The crevice through which the spy looked was small, indeed; but the light, faint as it was, that fell upon his face, revealed the clearly cut features of the Delaware runner, already mentioned.

The blade of the knife that filled his right hand he wisely kept from the starlight, and he seemed not to breathe, so motionless he crouched there on the tent's rim.

"What does Snow-bird see?" asked Elskatawa, who had never removed his eyes from the sleep-talker since his entrance into the lodge.

Slowly the girl's lips moved.

"I see four Indians hurrying up the Wabash," she said, in the Shawnee tongue, "and a pale-face is with them. His hands are tied, and he walks lame as if from a wound."

The Briton and Elskatawa exchanged glances.

"Who leads the Shawnees?" asked the former.

Snow-bird did not reply.

"She talks only for Elskatawa," said the Prophet, with a smile, and then to the same question, repeated by the red-man's lips, she said:

"A tall brave whose plume is a single feather."

"Oagla," said Howland.

The Prophet nodded.

"I wonder who the chief has captured!" the soldier continued half musingly. "Ask the girl."

Elskatawa shook his head.

"Fair Face will see the pale-face when Oagla comes," he said; then to the girl again: "What sees Snow-bird now?"

"I see a cave, and the rocks above it almost touch the

stars On a couch of skins sleeps a girl as fair as the red rose that Elskatawa brings from the prairies, and a pale-face bends over her."

The two men started at the revelations of the dreamer—the child of THE WILL—and a name dropped simultaneously from their lips.

"Omeme!"

"Ask her where Omeme is," cried the soldier, eagerly, and a cunning light flashed in the Indian's eyes as he turned to the girl again.

"Whither wanders the mind now?"

The sorcerer did not speak, and Howland bit his lips with rage.

He knew that Snow-bird could reveal Omeme's present hiding place, for, in her trances, she had revealed more startling mysteries than this, and he believed that the Prophet was playing him false. He watched the savage closely, and slowly his hand crept to his knife.

"After all, is the Spirit a fraud—a deceiver?" he asked, sarcastically.

"If Snow-bird can tell more about the cave she shall," said Elskatawa, and for the first time he touched the sleeper's skin.

Then his finger pressed her pulse.

"What sees Snow-bird?"

"An Indian approaching Tippecanoe," she said. Monckton Howland's wrath almost burst forth in oaths; and he darted a fierce look at the calm and triumphant wizard. "The runner looks like a Delaware," continued the girl, "and he enters the square. About him the braves gather and Elskatawa, my father, sees his plume of the owl's wing. Snow-bird looks beneath the paint and sees a white face, for she saw the spy glide from the white warrior's lodge, and paint his face beside the big water."

Elskatawa rose to his feet, and looked at the soldier, while the spy, squatted without the lodge, started, and gazed upon the thrilling tableau.

"Snow-bird will see no more to-night," said the Prophet, and stooping quickly he roused the girl from her mesmeric trance.

As usual, she complained of fatigue, and wondered why sleep should thus strangely prostrate her.

"The painted pale-face must be found," said the magician, "and in the dress he has stolen, he shall die before the sun shines. We must put our braves upon the Delaware's trail," he continued. "We will find him prowling about like the dog, discovering the number of our braves. Fair Face may kiss the Snow-bird ere he goes."

"Yes, yes," said the girl, eagerly, trying to lift herself from the couch. "Snow-bird is going to love Fair Face, for he will fight the white warriors who would despoil Tippecanoe."

With a smile, the Englishman stooped, and, embracing the girl, kissed her.

His was a strange courtship.

A moment later the twain left the beautiful one alone, and the eyes of the Delaware at the foot of the shadows watched them depart.

"I have found her—Florence Chalmers," he said, in English, and in an audible tone; "but I stand between the jaws of death. For my presence—my identity—is known, and I am doomed, when caught, to the stake. But, what a strange girl! Her mind makes long journeys, and she sees—"

He paused abruptly, for a yell, ringing out loud and clear upon the crisp November night air, sent its echoes back from the river lands.

"The band with the white man has reached the village," he said, "and now will they hunt for me. The prize is so near, and escape possible. I will do it!"

The spy darted toward the entrance. He seized the long curtain, and was in the act of flinging it aside, when the whiz of an arrow greeted his ear, and a barbed shaft penetrated the robe within an inch of his head.

Corporal Howe started, turned, and lifted his knife as a tall figure darted upon him.

A pealing cry rung from the Shawnee's lips, and, like a rock, the discovered spy received the fierce onslaught.

The clash of knives followed, and fiery sparks leaped heavenward, but only for a moment.

Then the combatants closed and swayed to and fro like

giant serpents in the death struggle ; but at last a separation was effected, and the border spy, stripped of his Indian garments, stood over his adversary.

Then a yell almost deafened him.

He looked up.

A cordon of savages surrounded him, and Elskatawa stood in the door of the snowy lodge.

Then the victor saw that the entire village had witnessed the battle, and that not a hand had been permitted to interfere.

CHAPTER IX.

THE PROPHET'S TREACHERY.

"I CAN not do battle against four nations, so take my knife."

Corporal Howe was the speaker, and he extended his bloody blade to Elskatawa, who took it while he glanced at the dead Indian on the ground.

"Pale spy come to Tippecanoe dressed in red-man's robes," said the sorcerer. "Has big white warrior no better spies than he?"

"I presume he has, but my own desires brought me here. Harrison did not send me."

"What spy come for?"

"That is none of your business, El-katawa," answered Howe.

Elskatawa bit his lip, and looked at the mad red faces that appeared in the hideousness of paints on every side.

The savages wanted a victim, and one stood within their grasp ; but they dared not harm him without the wizard's commands.

"Where Fair Face?" asked the Prophet, failing to distinguish the Englishman in the crowd.

"Oagla and him talk in his lodge," replied a warrior, deferentially. "Chief bring pale scout to Tippecanoe, and hasten to meet Fair Face."

"So Oagla is in, then?" said Elskatawa, scarcely above a murmur. "He has been hunting Omeme for Fair Face. May be he has found her, and come to tell him."

He started forward at this thought, but the circle of savages arrested his progress, and told him that he had a captive to dispose of.

"Take the pale spy to the prison-but," he said, turning to a big warrior, "and lead him forth when Elskatawa would have him die, as die he must, for the blows he gave to-night."

The soldier did not move when the chief touched his arm, and Elskatawa was moving off when a sweet voice fell upon his ear.

"My father!"

He paused suddenly, then sprung to the door of the white lodge.

"Why stand ye here, braves?" he shouted, hoarsely, darting his fierce glance over the lingering red-men. "Disperse, and watch for other hawks in doves' feathers. Tippecanoe swarms with the big warrior's spies."

The imperious motion of the hand that accompanied the look, hurried the savages away, and the Prophet turned into the lodge.

Snow-bird was standing at the foot of the couch, and her look told the wizard that she had witnessed some strange scenes.

"Pale spy prettier than Fair Face, my father," she said, artlessly. "Is he Indian's foe?"

"Yes," sharply retorted Elskatawa. "His knife was lifted against the Prophet's heart, and he slew Cunning Mink, the mighty Pottawatamie."

"My father, did the pale spy lift his knife against you?"

"Elskatawa has spoken. Does he ever use forked words?"

The girl did not speak; but sunk down upon the couch and buried her face in the robes.

Tenderly, but with a frown on his features, he bent over her.

"What hurt Snow-bird?"

The girl refused to speak, until he repeated the question in a sterner tone.

"Snow-bird's heart hurts," looking up at the unpitying eyes of the sorcerer. "The pretty pale spy must die!"

"And should he not die? He is the red-man's foe, Snow-bird."

"Yes, yes, Snow-bird is Shawnee; she has been taught to hate the Indians' enemies."

Elskatawa smiled, for he had fostered and taught her that inveterate hatred for sixteen years.

"Would Snow-bird plead for the spy?" he asked, watching her curiously.

"No!" she answered, after a long silence. "He slew a brave; he is an American; but he is pretty—prettier than Fair Face."

"Snow-bird is Fair Face's."

"Yes."

Elskatawa rose to his feet.

"Let her never forget this," he said, looking down at the girl, and then turned on his heel before she could frame a reply.

He flung the curtains together behind him, and they flapped in the face of Snow-bird, who had leaped to her feet for the purpose of speaking again.

"Snow-bird dare not cross the threshold of the white lodge," she said, turning to the couch again. "For many, very many moons, no Indian save my father has seen this face, and he says that none shall see it until I become the squaw of Fair Face, the Indians' friend. But the pale spy," and here the eyes of the beautiful mystery glistened with a tear. "Snow-bird must hate him, because he is an American; but she could love him as she loves her father, if the Shawnees all were dead, and Fair Face far away."

She parted the curtains and peered out into the starlight, a long time.

A strange quiet brooded over the village, and not a form was visible in the light that fell gently upon it.

What passed through the girl's mind, as she stood there, will never be known; but the sudden donning of a black mink-skin robe, told of the forming of some determined resolutions. She also thrust a long-bladed knife into her girdle. Then she drew the curtains aside, and for the first time in

long years, Snow-bird, the Shawnees' mysterious captive, crossed the threshold of the white lodge.

The scene without seemed new and strange to her, and she did not know where to go. A number of lodges greeted her eyes, and the paths that led among them perplexed the girl to no small degree.

But at last she walked away, and disappeared from the vicinity of the white lodge.

When the Prophet left the snowy wigwam he hurried toward the western limits of the village, and, aided by the dim starlight and his native shrewdness, crouched unperceived in the rear of a lodge that stood quite a goodly distance from its less pretentious neighbors.

The interior of the structure was revealed by a small fire, and the sorcerer was enabled to mark the occupants—a white man and an Indian.

Their identity was at once established, and this caused El-skatawa to put every sense keenly on the alert.

"You say you can find her, Oagla?" asked the white man—Monckton Howland.

"The words that fell from Muddy Brook's lips will not lead him astray."

"Good! she must be among the big bluffs."

"Oagla knows every cave that hides among them. He will find Omeme."

"And kill Tiger-Heart?"

"Yes; into the big chief's back will the Shawnee drive his knife."

"Good again."

"But the Prophet's child? Fair Face has bought her," said the Indian, eagerly.

"I don't want her if I can get the red girl. If Oagla kills Tiger-Heart and hides Omeme for me, I will see that he gets the wizard's beautiful flower."

A smile of satisfaction played with the Indian's lips, and he rose to his feet.

"Oagla eager," he said, looking down at the Englishman. "He go to night."

"There is no necessity for haste. You have not rested yet."

"Oagla's limbs never tire," was the reply. "He go down Wabash in canoe, and he must fix it a little before he launch it. It sunk in the creek beneath the bending tree."

"God, or your Manitou, speed you on your mission, Oagla," said Howland, rising and grasping the Indian's hand. "I will do the fair thing with you. You have lived near me long enough to know that I never lie. An Englishman can not be false! Are you going alone?"

"Oagla go alone. If other Indians go, they make too broad trail and would claim Oagla's shining money, and perhaps the soldier's white squaw."

A moment later Monckton Howland stood alone in his own lodge, and the Indian whom he had commissioned to do a crime, was hastening to the sunken canoe, followed by a man whose right hand touched the hilt of a knife.

That man was Elskatawa, the Prophet, and after many subtle moves, he surprised the chief bailing his boat.

Oagla started at the open step and drew his knife; but when he recognized the intruder he put it up and smiled.

"Oagla works when the stars shine," said the wizard creeping nearer the boat-bailer. "Will he launch his boat to-night?"

"Yes; he will row down the Wabash, and watch the warriors of the great white governor."

"Oagla is faithful," and then silence fell about the twain.

Ever and anon the chief glanced at the sorcerer; but not with suspicious eye. It was quite common for Elskatawa to wander about at all hours of the night, for, according to his reports, when the stars shone brightest, the most important messages came from heaven.

Therefore, Oagla did not notice the movements of the Prophet, who, like the snake, was preparing to strike his victim.

At length he reached the rear of the chief, and slowly drew the knife.

He did not raise the weapon above his head; on the contrary he buried it in the grass for a moment, and then executed a terrible upward thrust. Oagla felt the cutting of the steel, and dropping the bailing gourd, he staggered from the canoe, with the death gurgle rattling in his throat.

No second blow was needed to complete Elskatawa's work.

The chief lying prone upon the ground looked up at his murderer, tried to speak, but ejected a mouthful of blood in the vain attempt, and then died!

The Prophet made sure that no one had witnessed his dastardly deed, before he turned to dispose of the corpse.

He bailed the canoe, and placed the dead therein.

Then he launched the frail vessel, and saw it drift away toward the Wabash, among whose murky waters Tippecanoe creek loses itself.

"He will never find Omeme," muttered the wizard murderer, with eyes fastened upon the disappearing bark; "but another trailer will!"

When the boat with its dead cargo had entirely disappeared, Elskatawa retraced his steps, and an hour later dismissed two young Indians at the door of his magic lodge.

"You will find her among the Kickapoo bluffs," he had said to them. "Search the cave by the thorny tree, and if you find her, drive your knives to her heart. And whoever, interposes, let him die, too, even if he be Tiger-Heart. Bring me her scalp that I may know that she is dead, and with it, if you can, bring the scalp of the pale trapper."

He saw his emissaries glide off in the starlight, and felt that he had won a victory over the British soldier. For Oagla was dead, and the two Shawnees whom he had sent upon the dread mission, were the best trailers in the valley of the Wabash.

"I'll go back to Snow bird now," he said. "The stars are dying in the sky, and she is sleeping soundly."

He left his lodge and walked rapidly toward the white swan.

Reaching it in the first faint glimmerings of morn, he drew the curtains aside, and stared upon an empty couch.

For a while he refused to credit his senses. He overturned the couch, and shook it well, robe by robe.

But no Snow-bird appeared.

"Snow-bird gone!"

The words were clothed in the garment of a groan, and completely unmanned, the sorcerer of the Shawnees sunk upon the ground.

By and by he was roused by a voice just beyond the curtain-door.

Rising with pallid face and blood-shot eyes, the Prophet answered the summons, and was confronted by Monckton Howland.

"The devil invaded Tippecanoe last night," said the Briton, "and he rescued the two spies from the prison hut."

Elskatawa started forward and clutched his arm.

"Watchemenetoc steal Snow-bird, too. See!"

He flung the skins aside as he spoke, and showed Fair Face the empty lodge.

CHAPTER X.

IN THE THORN-TREE CAVE.

It was Tiger-Heart's intention as the reader has already seen, to keep Omeme hidden from all eyes save his own.

After his important capture in the cascade cave, as narrated in our second chapter, he bent his steps toward a picturesque spot known to-day, as then, by the cognomen of the Kickapoo Bluffs.

It was distant about seven miles from the falls, and the more pretentious Wabash flowed directly through it.

The chief was proud of his night's work, and breathed words of burning passion into his captive's ears, as he hurried over the ground, eager to reach his destination before the first blushings of morn.

In this desire he succeeded, for during the double darkness that heralds the speedy arrival of dawn, he entered the broken country and walked beneath the bluffs.

He congratulated himself upon his uniform success, for he believed that he had not been trailed.

In truth, who would trail him?

The scout was lying dead near the silver water, and the trapper, no doubt, was with Harrison.

True, the spies of Elskatawa and Monckton Howland were hunting for Omeme; but he had not encountered them for a

long time, and therefore he was inclined to believe that they were relinquishing the quest.

But a spy followed Tiger-Heart from the glen to the bluffs—a spy whose movements resembled the grotesque motions of the Borneo monkey.

It was Muddy Brook, whose death the reader has already witnessed.

The faint starlight enabled the chief to obtain his bearings, and at last he paused beside a prostrate thorn-tree, which, at some remote day, had been torn from the cliffs above by the fury of the wind. The limbs were already gone, and the trunk itself was decaying.

For a moment the Indian stood by the tree, and looked and listened; then he started toward the rocks, and disappeared from the sight of the stars and the dark figure that regarded him from a rock near the river.

It was evident that Tiger-Heart had visited the cave before, for he picked his way safely in the gloom, knew when to turn to the right, and to the left.

Through devious windings he bore the girl, and at last halted in almost palpable darkness. A sense of warmth filled the place, and the light that the chief produced revealed Omeme's future prison.

"Omeme live here till Tiger-Heart drives pale-faces from the Wabash," he said.

"Where will we live then?"

"At Tippecanoe."

"Why not go there at once?"

The chief shook his head, and, with an air of truth, crept nearer the girl.

"Fair Face there," he said. "Elskatawa there, too."

"Well; does Tiger-Heart fear *them*?"

"No; but they want Omeme."

"After the big battle they will want her still," said the captive.

Tiger-Heart shook his head.

"No," he said, with a smile; "people often die in battle!"

The girl comprehended his meaning. He intended to slay both Elskatawa and the British soldier in the approaching conflict.

"Their spies never find Omeme here," he resumed, glancing about the room with a feeling of security. "They never think of looking for girl so far under ground. The big woods is over us, and the river is half-mile away."

Daylight never penetrated the cave; night dwelt there eternally.

By and by Tiger-Heart rose and left Omeme at the fire.

Presently he returned, leading a brace of huge wolf-dogs, whose hoarse growlings the girl had heard a few moments before.

The color of the beasts was tan, and they showed their teeth and growled at the Indian girl whose white face drew a smile to the chief's lips.

"Dogs no hurt Omeme unless she attempt to leave cave lodge," he said, as he proceeded to chain them near the narrow entrance. "White man make chains for Tiger-Heart long ago on Miami. They are strong enough to hold the big dogs, and they will guard Omeme while the chief trails the white soldiers."

"Tiger-Heart is going away, then?"

"Yes; he must go, but he will come back soon. Omeme will find pemmican, roast rabbit and water in the cave, when she wants it. After a while, she must feed the dogs; they like her then, p'r'aps, and not growl at her."

Then the chief proceeded to remove all weapons from the cave, and having done this, he bade Omeme good-by, said a few words to the dogs, and vanished from sight.

He marched from the cavern to the strong arms of Silas Frost, the trapper, who delivered him over to Harrison, as has been witnessed in a former chapter.

Two days, with their chill November winds, followed the chief's departure from the thorn-tree cave, and the second night threw its starry veil over the lofty bluffs and shimmering stream.

Silas Frost, after watching Muddy Brook die in the Devil's Footpath, secluded himself until twilight. Then he emerged from his retreat, and with a ready rifle at the "trail," pushed through the woods toward the Kickapoo Bluffs.

"Now, Mr. Tiger-Heart, I'll outwit you," he ejaculated, triumphantly. "While Harrison holds you a prisoner, I'll

recover my forest flower, and hide her where a thousand sharp-eyed Shawnees can not find her. Don't I know all about the thorn-tree cave? Didn't I hide there several years ago, when the Weas hunted me for a lock of my hair? I thank heaven that Muddy Brook lived long enough to tell me where Omeme is. And I've got to hurry, too. I promised to help Harrison at Tippecanoe, and I mustn't go back on the 'in'ral."

Thus the trapper communed with himself as he rapidly traversed the ground, and the well-preserved dog-trot of an hour and a half brought him to the "thorn-tree cave."

The silence of death brooded about the entrance, and while the trapper listened there, lying behind the tree, the hoot of the owl and the flapping of bat-wings in his very face, ought to have warned him of the dangers that waited for him beyond the forbidding entrance.

"If I war Boyd Furnas, who used to trap on the Lickin', I'd never go into that cave. That owl and them bat-wings would say: 'You'll never come out erlive; don't go in.' But Si Frost don't b'lieve in tokens, an' ef Satan would come here an' tell me that Tiger-Heart waited for me in thar, I'd call him a liar an' go in. Owls do speak, sometimes; they foretold poor Reed's death, twenty years ago; but they can't scare me now."

Indeed, the owl and the bats seemed to be coaxing the trapper to remain from the threshold of the cave, for when he crept over the log and moved toward the entrance, the hoots and flappings and chatterings grew into a din.

But Silas Frost was a man of iron nerves; he had never shrunk from duty, and he would have died for the beautiful girl with whom he had dwelt for years. Her gentle eyes and voice had made him more a man than he was when he first wrenched her from Tiger-Heart's embrace, and he owed her as much as she owed him.

So, into the cavern crept the adventuresome trapper, rifle in hand, and the keen blade of his knife between his teeth.

It took an empty hand to guide and to steady him in the darkness.

"It's a long way to the place," he murmured, picking his way over the loose stones that lay in the path; "but I kin

find it; I've found it before, an' Si Frost never forgets a place he has once visited. If Muddy Brook hasn't lied, I'm all right, an' when Tiger-Heart gets away from the gin'ral, he'll come hyar to find an empty nest."

He was inclined to laugh at his anticipations; but kept silent and moved on.

By and by the glimmerings of a fire greeted his eyes and he paused with an exclamation of joy.

He watched the light for some time, and listened intently while he did so, then moved forward again.

He executed many cautious movements before entering the dimly-lighted cave, which he did unmolested.

The huge wolf-dogs which Tiger-Heart had placed there the preceding night were not to be seen, nor did a sound indicate that the cave was tenanted.

Who had removed the dogs?

Slowly against the dun wall Silas Frost rose to his feet and inspected the cavern.

His eyes fell upon a couch of skins, spread in the center of the apartment, and he saw that a figure lay among them.

Ah! it was Omeme, sleeping peacefully in Tiger-Heart's den—dreaming perhaps of the man who was near to save.

Thus thought the trapper, as he moved forward, and, with a smile on his lips, he bent over the couch.

Then he put forth his hand, and touched that which, in the dim light, he had taken for Omeme's face.

A fierce, devilish growl quickly followed the touch, and instead of the Indian girl, a monster wolf-dog leaped to his feet!

Silas Frost sprung erect and grappled the giant brute with his bare hands, for the sudden onslaught had torn the knife from his grasp, and it lay beside the rifle on the ground.

"I'd sooner fight ten Injuns than one wolf dog," he ejaculated between his hot breathings. "You don't know whar to take 'em. There!"

As he uttered the exclamation he rid himself of the animal and stooped for knife and rifle.

He secured both, and was preparing to meet his antagonist's new charge, when a stern voice caused the dog to recoil, and startled him.

He turned to the right and beheld Tiger-Heart covering his breast with a rifle!

Beside the chief, showing his great white teeth and growling, stood the second dog, and the first was sneaking to his master with his vengeful eyes glaring at his late foe.

Well might the trapper exhibit surprise, for he believed the Shawnee thunderbolt safe in the American camp.

"Last night trapper take Tiger-Heart in woods; to-night Tiger-Heart take trapper in cave," said the chief, a smile of satisfaction playing with his lips. "He hunt Omeme, but he find her not. She gone!"

Silas Frost started forward impulsively.

"Tell me where she is," he began; "tell me this minute, or—"

Tiger-Heart's cheek dropped nearer the rifle, and the trapper saw one eye close as he spoke.

"Stop, trapper. The Manitou's hunting-grounds are near. Tiger-Heart commands here—not the pale-face. Put down the gun and knife."

Frost hesitated, but finally threw his weapons on the ground.

He saw that he was dealing with the sternest of men, and that man his unscrupulous enemy.

"There!" he said looking at the chief again. "I am defenseless now. Go on with your talk."

"Tiger-Heart not much to say; but he much to do. Trapper want Omeme, but Tiger-Heart got her, and he keep her, too. If pale-face gets from cave he still hunt for red girl, and mebbe find her. But he no get away from Tiger-Heart till the chief says, 'Go!'"

The Indian advanced as he uttered the last word, and the dogs walked beside him growling.

He drew a rope from beneath the folds of the blanket that partially covered his breast, and proceeded to bind his enemy's hands on his back.

"If trapper moves," he said, "the dogs will spring at him, and Tiger-Heart will hold him on the ground while they cut the big veins in his neck with their sharp teeth."

Silent and sullen Silas Frost submitted to the ropes, and when the chief had finished his work he murmured:

FOLLOWING THE DOG

"Tell me what you are goin' to do with me. 'Twould be a relief to know, an' I'm curious."

"Trapper see by-'m-by," was the reply, followed by a sinister smile, and a minute later the chief secured a torch from the fire. "Now we go, Coosa, into the narrow den."

The dog addressed as Coosa bounded toward a slim, dark passage-way, and the chief turned to the trapper.

"Pale-face, follow the dog," he said.

CHAPTER XI.

SAVAGE HONOR.

SILAS FROST followed the dog.

Tiger-Heart brought up the rear with cocked rifle, and torch above his plumed head.

The light streamed before the trapper, and showed him the walls and ceiling of the rocky corridor he was traversing, perhaps to doom and death.

The chief maintained a dogged silence for many minutes, and when he did speak, it was to command the leading dog to quicken his pace.

Our trapper knew that it was daylight without the cave—the daylight of the sixth of November.

"Rejoin me on the night of the sixth at the farthest," Harrison had said on parting. "We will have reached Tippecanoe then, and if the Indians fight it will be there."

And he had answered the governor thus:

"Whatever happens I will be with you that night, gineral. I coul'n't miss the fight if thar's to be one, fur the hull Wash valley."

But how was he to reach Harrison now?

Silas Frost thought of this while Tiger-Heart goaded him forward; but he did not despair.

On, still on in a gradual ascent, until the cool night air fanned his heated face. At length men and dogs found themselves in the forest above the bluffs!

Silas Frost was surprised, but kept silent. Daylight was peeping through the wood, and the face of his foe was distinctly visible. Not one jot of its sternness had relaxed, and the red hand toyed with the gun-lock in a careless, dangerous manner.

"Many years ago," said Tiger-Heart, looking the trapper sternly in the eye, "the trapper saved Tiger-Heart's life. Has he forgotten it?"

The trapper's head dropped, and the chief watched him narrowly.

"I can not think of the time," he said at length. "Chief, we have been enemies ever since we knew one another. I never saved your life."

Tiger-Heart smiled faintly.

"Once," said he, "a band of Shawnees chased a chief who carried a little girl in his arms. They drove him toward the Miami, and he paused on the banks to meet them, and to die like a brave Shawnee. But all at once a pale-faced hunter jumped from the bushes, and tore the girl from the chief's arms, and ran away into the woods."

"Oh! that I recollect, Tiger-Heart," cried Frost. "You was that chief, and—Omeme the little girl."

"And the man who faces Tiger-Heart, the hunter."

"But how did I save your life then?"

"If the pale-face had not come, Tiger-Heart and Omeme would have died before their people. But the chief resolved to live for the girl, so he plunged into the river and escaped. Thus the hunter saved Tiger-Heart's life."

A long silence followed the declaration.

"Tiger Heart has canceled that debt now," the chief said, breaking the stillness, and with the words on his lips he severed Frost's bonds. "He gives the hunter a life for the one he gave him long time ago. The pale-face must go now. Tiger-Heart will see him out of sight, and then he is his bitter enemy again. Henceforth, there is a deadly war between the trapper and Tiger-Heart. They will trail each other, and drink each other's blood. They may meet in the big battle that is near and one of them may die there. Tiger-Heart will lead his people against the pale governor, and they will prevail; the Prophet has heard voices from the Manitou land,

and they never lie. Trapper came to cave to find Omeme, but he found Tiger-Heart. He will never see the red girl again! Now let him go."

"Tiger-Heart, I've cause to thank you," said the trapper, never deserting his tracks; "but I will not. You may shoot me down now if you want to. Such a course may save your life, for, by heavens, chief, if ever I get a chance at you, I will not spare. Here let us fight for the girl now. You've hidden her somewhar among these caves beneath us, an' a ferret couldn't find her. Give me a knife, an' I'll fight you an' your dogs to once, you telling me first how to find the girl in case I conquer."

Tiger-Heart seemed inclined to accept the wager, for a fierce light shot from his eyes, and his hand touched a knife in his girdle.

"So you'll fight, eh?" cried the trapper, eagerly stepping toward the chief, with outstretched hand. "Give me the steel an' let us at it."

But the Shawnee shook his head.

"Tiger-Heart, you're a dirty, greasy squaw! Heretofore I have deemed you a man; but now you are what I have just called you. You'd steal beads from a sick papoose, you would! Coward! dog! liar!"

But the Indian would not be provoked. He smiled at the trapper's words and stilled the growlings of his dogs with his moccasined feet.

Frost bit his lip for chagrin, and again heaped insult upon insult, hoping to draw Tiger-Heart into an acceptance of the challenge; but the chief would not be moved.

"Go!" he said, at last, calmly and with no signs of anger on his face. "When the trapper has passed from Tiger-Heart's sight, his heart will burn, and they will be blood-seeking dogs once more. Trapper will never see Omeme again."

"Oh, that's just your opinion," said Frost; "but I thought a dog would bite when he was kicked. Yellow dogs will, I b'lieve, but red ones won't."

"Go!"

"I will. I want to get out of sight of the man-squaw," sneered the trapper, hoping yet, by his cutting language, to draw the chief into an encounter. "Good-by, dog. When

we meet ag'in, I'll kick you until you either whine or growl."

"The trapper and the *chief* will meet at Tippecanoe."

"Good! I want to see you there."

Then, with a look of withering scorn and contempt, Silas Frost turned on his heel, and, perfectly weaponless, walked away.

He did not look back until he had placed several hundred yards between him and the place of separation.

When he turned his head, he saw Tiger-Heart wave a parting salute, and disappear with his fierce dogs.

For a moment he stood undecided concerning future actions. He was half-resolved to return and, beardng Tiger-Heart in his den, settle the feud at once and forever; but other counsels prevailed, and he turned to the river.

"I mustn't disappoint the gin'ral, and the Injun said that we would meet ag'in at Tippecanoe. Thero we'll settle accounts, an' I'm anxious to know how Corp'ral Howe made out with the Prophet's captive. Yes, I'll go back to Harrison."

When the trapper left the army it was encamped about nine miles south of the Indian village, and he expected to find it very near the great object *ʔa ʔi ʔi*.

He deplored the loss of weapons and sighed for a horse. He hoped to secure both by following the river, nor was he wholly disappointed.

He reached the bank of the Wat *ʔa* and ascended a tree, from whose piney branches he could command a good view of the surface of the water for miles in both directions.

He first directed his gaze down-stream, but nothing appeared on the liquid mirror, then he looked toward Tippecanoe, and lo! a dark object was drifting with the murky tide.

At first he thought it a huge water ball; but by and by it grew into a canoe.

"Now, somebody's in that boat to see 'y it," he murmured; "somebody's thar, playin' 'posse. I'll wait an' see."

Still clinging to his perch, the Trapper of the Twin Cas-

"That is a pretty possum game," he said, "an if I hed a rifle I'd put an end to it in a jiffy. What kin the greaser mean? I'm puzzled; but thet drift 'll stop 'im, an' then I'll see what he's up to."

Almost directly opposite the trapper, a drift composed of small trees and dead bushes, obstructed the current, and toward this the canoe was slowly drifting.

Suddenly, to the trapper's joy, it brought up against the drift.

"Now, Mr. Injun, wake up."

But the occupant of the canoe continued to lie still, and for an hour Silas Frost regarded him curiously.

"It shan't puzzle me any longer," he said. "Thar's a good rifle in the boat, an' I want one just now."

"So he descended and cautiously approached the water's edge.

The canoe rested about forty yards from shore, and after divesting himself of his hunting-frock, the trapper plunged into the water and swam away.

Still he half believed that the boat was a decoy, and a rifle-shot would not have surprised him.

But he reached the craft in safety and looked over the sides upon—a corpse!

"Well, well," he muttered, "this is funny. A dead Injun boatin' on the Wabash; never see'd such a thing afore. Wonder who he is!" and then he examined the body. "Hev'n't I run across this chap afore to-day? Why certainly I hev. It's nobody but Oagla, the feller who disputed a deer with me last summer. Wonder who took his wind. Ah! hyar's the hole—they did it with a knife. Well, Injun, you've brought me a rifle, and some ammunition, for which I'm much obliged. If I hed time, I'd bury you; but I'll take yer scalp for you shot Mud'ly Brook, an' I promised to throw yer hair on the little Kickapoo's grave."

In a trice, the trapper had scalped the dead Shawnee, and was rising from his sickening work, when the crack of a rifle broke the silence that brooded over the river, and a bullet buried itself in the driftwood near his head.

A canoe containing two Indians was rapidly approaching from above!

Instantly the trapper tossed Oagla into the stream, and occupied the canoe.

Then with the aid of the paddle he pushed it clear of the drift, and darted down the river.

The two savages gave chase with a yell, and gained on the pale-face, whose canoe leaked badly.

"I'll wood it!" he ejaculated, glancing over his shoulder and the next moment he was pushing toward the bank.

The canoe struck ground, and was instantly abandoned.

The pursuers raised their rifle at this, and each one fired at the hunter.

A curse parted his lips, and the Shawnee's rifle fell from his hands. But he stooped, and, snatching it from the ground, turned upon the Indians now at his mercy.

"I'll rid the Wabash of one pest, an' pay for the ball in my arm," he said, spitefully.

The two savages tried to dodge the trapper's aim; but in vain. A death cry followed the report, and one of the two savages fell back, dead!

Then Silas Frost waved his mink-skin cap above his head, and with a shout of mingled victory and defiance darted away.

"Now, with such a rifle as this, I'm a man again," he exclaimed. "I wonder whar the Injuns war goin'; but no difference. *I'm* goin' to Tippecanoe."

Ah, had he known the mission of the savages in the boat he might have tarried to destroy the remaining enemy, even at the risk of being taken by the Shawnees drawn to the spot by the rifle-shots and yells.

They were the emissaries to whom the reader has heard Askatawa the Prophet whisper this command:

"Go to the thorn-tree cave, and drive your knives to the red girl's heart."

CHAPTER XII.

A DOUBLE FRIEND.

WE left Snow-bird, the Shawnee Prophet's beautiful captive, wandering apparently aimlessly, among the lodges of Tippecanoe.

It was the night of the fifth of November, about thirty-three hours prior to the battle, and the night that witnessed the capture of Hiram Gleason in the trapper's cave, and Corporal Howe in the Indian village.

As already remarked, the girl's surroundings seemed strange. Cooped up in the white lodge, she knew nothing of the world of forest, prairie and river, save what Elskatawa had deigned to tell her simple heart, and, no doubt, he had planned stories suited to the occasion.

As far remote as memory could travel, she had known the Prophet; she had grown from girlhood to young womanhood among his weird incantations, and had learned to call him 'father.' She never thought, poor, simple child, that he could not be her father—he the red-skinned man. Her skin was white as snow. Elskatawa would let no sunshine tan it; she had grown up in the shade, a pale lily, but a fair one.

Some good spirit seemed to guide her, for she neared the hut that contained the white spies.

Then she thought of the corporal, for she did not know that another white man was a prisoner as well.

"My father said that the pretty pale-face was in the strong hut, and this must be it," she said, halting near the structure that loomed up between her and the stars in proportions like an Alp.

After a moment's pause the girl glided forward again, and rounded the prison hut only to hear a startling exclamation of terror, and to see a tall Indian stagger from her.

She had suddenly confronted the plumed guard, who, be-

lieving her, clad in white as she was, an apparition from spirit-land, deemed it best to fly from her presence.

While many Indians knew that Elskatawa possessed a white girl, few had ever seen her face, and her sudden appearance to the superstitious guard was the signal for his sudden disappearance.

Snow-bird cast herself upon the ground to await what might transpire, but a voice beyond the door aroused her.

"I've tried the hut thoroughly, Gleason. It is secure; we can not escape. Without outside assistance we are gone coons."

Advancing, the girl now examined the mass of thongs that secured the door against the spies, and the examination was followed by the drawing of her secreted knife.

No keener blade ever set captives free, for a single blow severed the cords, and Snow-bird pushed the door open.

"Pale-face," she said, softly, and two faces instead of one appeared at the door.

The girl started at seeing them.

"Why there be two pale-faces," she said. "Where other come from?"

She looked at Hiram Gleason as she spoke.

"The Indians picked me up and brought me here," he said; "but we'll outwit the devils now."

"Who devils?" asked Snow-bird, curiously.

"Why the Indians, of course."

"Indians good; pale-face devils. Snow-bird come to say to Pretty Face that she will free him if he help Indian fight the bad soldiers that march up the river," she said, turning abruptly to the corporal. "She love him, and he can help Shawnee much. What he say?"

"Yes, I'll help Indian," said the soldier, taking in the situation in a moment. "I will drive the white governor back to the southern river, and my white brave here will help me."

"Will he?"

She looked at the scout.

"That I will; I am mad at the pale-faces, for they broke my gun against a tree."

Snow-bird smiled her satisfaction. A lifetime in the forest

had made her in habits and feelings an Indian, and she hated the whites with the inveterate hatred of her adopted people.

But, now that she had drawn the spies over to her cause, she was at a loss what to do with them. She had severed their bonds, and they stood free before her.

Her puzzled expression did not escape the scouts.

"Now that Snow-bird has found white warriors who will fight for her," said the corporal, "she must lead them to a place of safety, for the Shawnees will not believe them true, and would imprison them again."

"Snow-bird take them to her lodge," said the girl, acknowledging the logic of the scout's words.

"No; that will not do. We can hide by the river."

"But river 'way off. Snow-bird not see it for many, many moons."

"To the creek, then; we'll find a boat there and row down to the river."

She smiled approvingly.

"To the creek, then," she said.

Hiram Gleason closed the strong oaken door, and a moment later the trio glided toward the creek.

"We'll take her with us," whispered Howe to the scout. "Heaven sent her to us to-night, and everything is playing right into our hands. We can easily find a dug-out at the creek, and we'll be with Harrison in two hours."

"You say the general is but nine miles from Tippecanoe?"

"I do; the Indians must make peace or fight to-morrow."

"But watch the girl and talk to her. If she will not go peaceably with us we must take her. For my part, I believe she carries a bee in her bonnet."

"Crazy? not the least bit of it," said Howe. "She has lived among the Indians so long that she, like a woman, is simple—ignorant I mean. She loves her people; hence her desire for us to fight for them."

Hiram Gleason did not reply, and saw his brother scout step to Snow-bird's side, and take her hand.

They had left the village behind now, and were hastening through a grove of young timber toward the creek.

"It is curious that, after sixteen years, Florence Chalmers, if Snow-bird really be the lost one, should be found. I can

scarcely believe it; but Howe is confident. He'll have a time weaning her from her wild life. I, too, will experience some trouble with—"

He paused and his head sunk upon his breast.

He was about to mention Silas Frost's red protege, but her fate, wrapped in mystery, kept back the name.

Where was Omemo then?

He had seen her in the arms of Tiger-Heart, who would never give her up tamely; he would slay her first.

The corporal had informed him of the chief's arrest and escape from Harrison's camp, and of the trapper's departure for the Cascade Cave; but no hope crept into his heart. He believed that Tiger-Heart was more than a match for Frost, and he predicted a failure on the white man's part.

Suddenly he raised his head.

"I will be free to hunt for her presently," he said. "I know the chief; I will trail him, and—"

"You may meet him in the fight," said Howe, who had overheard the words.

"If the Indians give battle—yes. I want to meet him."

"I'd rather meet a pack of wolves."

"The creek—the creek!" exclaimed Snow-bird, at this juncture, and, quickening their steps, the trio soon stood on the bank of the little stream, whose waters were soon to be crimsoned with blood.

About them the stillness of death reigned, and they believed that they had traversed the tortuous distance from village to stream untrailed.

A brief search revealed the hiding-place of a canoe, and Hiram Gleason drew it forth, while his companion talked to Snow-bird on the bank.

The craft was capable of containing four persons, and the paddles were in good condition. But the want of firearms was felt by the scouts. Utterly defenseless, they stood in the Indian country, and peril hovered over their heads like the sword of Damocles.

"Thank heaven, we can reach Harrison in less than two hours," said Gleason, drawing the boat up to the others, and gazing into the spy's face; "but, if a fellow had a rifle, he'd feel a little safer. But let us be off, Howe."

Howe looked at Snow-bird and tried to lead her to the boat ; but she resisted gently, and with a frightened look.

" Snow-bird go with her friends to their hiding-place on the big river," said Howe, persuasively.

" No, no ; Snow-bird stay with her people ; she must not leave them."

Hiram Gleason, standing in the boat, bit his lips for vexation.

Howe was averse to carrying the fair girl off by force and tried persuasion again, with the same lamentable result.

She resisted gently, yet firmly.

" Pale-faces go ; Snow-bird wait in village till they come back."

Howe looked at Gleason.

" This won't do, corporal," said the latter. " We're losing precious time, and it's hastening toward daylight. If you want her, take her, and be quick about it !"

He stepped nearer the stern of the boat, as he finished, and motioned his companion to seize the girl.

The next moment, the soldier lifted Snow-bird from the ground and started forward.

" Quick ! quick ! Indians !" shouted Gleason stooping for the paddless.

Snow-bird shrieked as the soldier's feet struck the boat, and pushed it from the bank.

It was a wild moment !

" Indians—where ?" asked the corporal.

" Across the creek. I heard them !"

The next instant a bright flash lit up the grove beyond the stream.

Corporal Howe, who was in the act of lowering Snow-bird to a seat in the middle of the canoe, staggered toward the stern, and the girl dropped from his grasp.

But, a moment later, he recovered and sprang to his prize.

" Are you hit ?" exclaimed the scout.

" Yes ; but the girl—look !"

The soldier lifted Snow-bird up, and the scout saw a crimson stain on her bosom.

"Dead?" he ejaculated.

"I don't know; but leave this place, Gleason. Quick, for heaven's sake."

His words were not needed to summon the young scout to action.

The paddle had already disappeared beneath the surface of the stream, and the canoe was speeding toward the broader Wabash.

Gleason, apparently had escaped unhurt, and the face that the Kentuckian now and then showed him was white with the pallor and the agony of death!

CHAPTER XIII.

ON THE EVE OF TIPPECANOE.

By and by the broad, bright flush of daylight blotted out the golden stars, and revealed the Indian village of Tippecanoe in a state of intense agitation. It was known that the spies had escaped, and that Harrison was quite near.

Fair Face, the British soldier, did not mourn the loss of Snow-bird. He believed that Oagla would soon return and report success on his mission.

"They're gone and we can't help it," said Howland.

"The pale-faces have taken her to the big army," the Prophet answered. "Elskatawa will not give her up; for sixteen summers he has watched her, and her heart has grown into his. The governor must give her up."

The soldier smiled:

"Do you think he will?"

"He must, or fight!"

"I guess he seeks a battle. He's an old warrior, who loves the whistling of bullets."

"But he must obey the Great Father at Washington, who says: 'Listen to the red-man's words of peace; do not strike when he would bury the hatchet.' He must obey the Great Father. Elskatawa will send a runner to him."

"What will that runner say?"

"He will say: 'El-katawa says to white chief give up the pale girl taken from Tippecanoe by the spies, and the Indians will make peace; keep her, and the Wabash shall be red with blood.'"

"Well, send your runners to the federal camp," sneered the Briton. "Harrison will not listen to your overtures."

"He must!"

"Well," petulantly; "try him."

A minute later two agile young Indians were summoned to the Prophet's side, and with the message already written, were dispatched to Harrison's army. Elskatawa believed that Snow-bird would be given up. He could control the tribes by his mummeries, for they placed implicit belief in them. He had already assured them that the Indians would be bullet-proof in the conflict rapidly drawing near, and that the Manitou had promised him a decisive victory over the pale-face. He could change all this with a word; a later communication from spirit-land would secure peace, which many Indians earnestly desired.

"I don't believe that Harrison wants to avoid war," said the Briton, walking from the Prophet after the departure of the messengers. "Of course he will refuse to give the girl up, and a bloody fight will follow. Now I'm not going to be here. The American's have an old grudge to settle with England's subjects, and I would be roughly handled were they to catch me in the battle. I'll leave to-night. Forever Monckton Howland will vanish from Tippecanoe. Elskatawa can love and fight alone hereafter. It isn't cowardice to desert an Indian, and then a man must look to his own neck first. Oigla will be about the Kickapoo bluffs to-night, and I will seek him there. I am confident that he is on Omeme's trail, and together we will find her."

The soldier drew aside the curtains of his lodge, as he spoke, and, entering, threw himself upon a couch of skins.

The sun was sealing the horizon now and excited groups of Indians discussed the advance of Harrison. All the available forces of the confederates were assembled at Tippecanoe, and the intention of making a grand stand against the invaders was manifested everywhere.

About ten o'clock a tall savage rode into the village, and soon a large circle of braves surrounded him.

Tiger-Heart, the thunderbolt, gazed upon the painted forms with a smile, and fired their souls with a warlike speech.

"The white soldiers are coming," he said. "Tiger-Heart heard their drums and saw their guns shine in the light. No peace must be talked of now. Tiger-Heart will slay the first brave who seeks to bury the hatchet."

"Elskatawa has sent runners to the governor," said a chief, "Last night two white spies escaped, and took the Prophet's child with them. So he said to pale warrior: 'Give child back, and the Indians will make peace.'"

Tiger-Heart uttered an exclamation of anger, and dismounted.

Fire flashed in his eyes, and he walked boldly to the sorcerer's lodge.

He did not crave admittance; he did what no man save the Prophet had ever done before him. He entered the lodge unbidden.

Elskatawa rose with an exclamation of horror, and started from the intruder.

"Dare you talk of peace?" demanded the furious chief. "Tiger-Heart speaks—the same Tiger-Heart who led the red-men over St. Clair's braves—who faced the Blacksnake on the Maumee."*

The chief's audacity seemed to paralyze the magician's tongue.

"Peace! peace! who says that Elskatawa talks of peace?" he stammered, when Tiger-Heart dared to clutch his arm.

"Indians who have heard you. Your child has been taken away, and with peace you would recover her."

"The braves have lied! Elskatawa sent runners to the white chief; but he sent no such words."

Tiger-Heart looked him squarely in the eye.

"Peace! peace!" repeated the chief: "there can be no peace! The pale-face will send runners to us soon. We must pretend that we want peace; we must ambush him, and cut him to pieces."

"We will!"

* General Wayne. The Indians called him the Blacksnake.

"What is the news from the Manitou?"

"The Indians will defeat the whites whose bullets will not hurt."

"Good! To-night we fight. Now recollect, Elskatawa, that Tiger-Heart will kill the first brave who talks of peace."

Then the curtains moved again, and Elskatawa was alone.

He did not follow the chief, but lay down upon the skin couch and soon passed into a deep slumber. He was not disturbed for several hours, when two Indians approached the lodge and broke his sleep.

With a smile the sorcerer recognized the faces of his messengers to Harrison, and trembling in every limb they entered at his bidding.

"Well, what says the white chief?" demanded Elskatawa, eagerly.

"He talks for peace, but he will not give the Prophet's child back to him. She is nearing the trail of death."

Elskatawa uttered an exclamation of incredulity, and started toward the speaker.

"What does Impah mean?" he cried.

"Last night the red-men fired at the spies in their boat, and a ball hit Snow-bird."

"Where ball hit her?"

The runner designated a certain spot on his left breast.

Elskatawa groaned, and buried his face in his hands.

"Did Impah see her?" he asked scarcely above a whisper.

"Yes; the white governor took us to her side, and the white medicine men were shaking their heads."

"Governor said: 'tell Elskatawa that girl belong to American now,'" remarked the second runner, speaking for the first time.

"Snow-bird shot, and going to the Manitou!" said the Prophet, slowly rising. "He never will see her 'gain! Now for war! now shall the pale-faces feel the Indians' power. Elskatawa will slay the first brave who talks for peace!"

He took a knife and gashed his breast till the red current flowed freely, and formed a horrid pool at his feet.

The runners watched him, aghast at his deed.

"Thus shall the pale-faces bleed," he cried. "They would

not give Snow bird back to Elskatawa that he might taste the blood from her bosom, and they shall suffer."

He seemed to grow into a devil then, and, frightened beyond control the spectators sprung to their feet, and fled precipitately from the lodge.

All hopes for peace, without the arbitrament of blood, were crushed out now.

He left the magic lodge an hour later, and held a council with Tiger-Heart and Monckton Howland, in which the plans of battle were agreed upon.

After the consultation the chief took the Englishman's arm.

"Oagla's voice will not be heard in the battle," Tiger-Heart said, and a curious smile was visible on his lips.

The Briton looked at him, with a puzzled expression.

"Why not?"

"He is dead."

Fair Face started.

"Dead?"

Tiger-Heart smiled broader at the white man's consternation.

"Tiger-Heart saw his scalpless head among some brush in the Wabash."

Monckton Howland could not speak. The sudden overturning of his plans, seemed to crush him to the earth.

"Tiger-Heart sorry. Oagla was Fair Face's spy."

"My spy! who says so?"

"Tiger-Heart! Listen, Fair Face: The red girl lives, but she is Tiger-Heart's."

"I bought her!" said Howland angrily.

"Tiger-Heart found her!"

"Well, well, we'll not quarrel about her, chief; at least, not until after the battle," said the Briton, anxious to curb the Indian's ire which was rising. "I don't love her now, as I did long ago; but I'd like to see her. She must be pretty now."

"The stars are not fairer than Ouzeme," exclaimed the chief rapturously.

Howland shot him a look of hatred which said, "I'll have her yet," and then they separated.

During the day preparation for the last grand Indian battle in the Wabash valley were made. Arms were looked after, and faces hideously bedaubed with paint. Toward evening the women and children were sent beyond the western confines of the village, and the Prophet delivered several encouraging messages from the spirit-land. Harrison's envoys were sent back with refusals to compromise, and the war cloud hovered over the trees.

The army continued to advance and at last appeared before the town, and now was exhibited the cunning of the Indian character.

The Prophet, hearing that the territorial governor was arranging his troops in order of battle, dispatched three Indians to him. The wily sorcerer requested that no hostilities should take place before the next morning, when a conference should be held with the principal chiefs, and terms of peace agreed on.

Harrison entertained the request favorably, and proceeded to bivouac his forces.

Night settled down upon the warlike scene, and the stars glittered in the sky.

During the armistice the treacherous Indians prepared for battle.

Tiger-Heart seemed everywhere, and once he stood before the Briton's lodge.

He spoke the white man's Indian name, but received no answer.

Then he entered the building and found it empty.

The poltroon's rifle, pistols and knives were missing, like himself.

The chief turned to hunt him in the village, and while he searched, asking everybody about the red-coat, a canoe was cutting the waters of Indiana's proudest river; its occupant was Monckton Howland.

"I know enough about the Kickapoo Bluffs to find her," he said as he plied the oars. "They can fight their own battles up the river. I want the girl, I bought and lost five years ago!"

CHAPTER XIV.

TIPPECANOE.

"WHAT do you think of the proposition just received from Elskatawa?"

"Concernin' the armistice?"

"Yes."

"I call it but the covering of some infernal Indian trickery. They intend fightin' us; that is settled in my mind. We'll hear bullets whistle afore daylight. I hev given Harrison my opinions, an' I guess he took 'em home, as I see he is guardin' the camp ag'in' a surprise. But how is the gal?"

"I have not seen her since I left our detachment, half an hour ago. I am on my way to her now."

"Then I'll go with you. You know I haven't seen her yet. Gleason war tellin' me about her, an' I want to set my peepers on her. He says that she's uncommon pretty."

"You shall see her. Come."

The twain, Corporal Howe and Silas Frost, moved away, talking the while.

"Where do you fight?" asked the soldier, addressing the scout.

"Both Gleason and I will fight with Barton's reg'lars. I want to see reg'lars fight, and Gleason wishes to be with me. Barton, you know, forms the left angle of the rear line, and there, if I am not mistaken, the storm will first burst. I 'pose you will remain in camp an' watch the gal?"

"I will. Harrison suggested such a course before I could ask for permission. He seems to think much of Snow-bird, and has visited her quite often."

"Is she goin' to get over it, corp'ral?"

"I don't know," said the soldier, with a dubious shake of the head. "The surgeons have extracted the ball; but she does not seem to improve."

The twain at last halted before a tent, which they entered on tip-toe.

A faint light revealed the appointments of the interior, and a pale face looked up at them from the pillows.

"She's asleep," said Howe, in a whisper; "kneel and look at her, Frost."

The trapper obeyed, and gazed upon the sufferer a long time.

"As pretty as a bunch of lilies," he said, rising. "I wouldn't lose her for the hull world."

"Nor would I," responded the dragoon; "but—"

He paused abruptly and started toward the girl, who had opened her eyes.

"Snow-bird?"

"Pretty Face," and a faint smile came to her lips as she spoke.

"Tell me that you feel better, Snow-bird," he said; "tell me something that will cheer me."

"Snow-bird breathes long breaths, now," she said, feebly.

"Thank heaven! that's a good sign."

The corporal looked up at the trapper with the last words, and the mink-skin cap bowed.

"You're going to live, aren't you, Snow-bird?"

"Yes!"

He kissed her pale lips, and was rising when an army-surgeon entered.

"There's hope," said the dragoon, looking at the military doctor.

"Yes; but quite faint—regard it thus. Her life still totters on the brink of the precipice of death. The excitement of the coming battle—the Indian yells, the volleys of musketry, may prove fatal to her. Guard her well to-night, corporal, and if she awakens during the fight, divert her mind from it, and make her cheerful if you can."

He said this in a whisper, the girl looking up from the couch, and wondering what he was saying.

But she could not resist slumber, and fell asleep again before the trio.

"If you have connected yourself with any part of the army you had best be there now," said the surgeon to the trapper.

"Then I will go to Barton. Corp'al, good-by!"

He put forth his hand, which Howe grasped.

"Come here after the night has fled."

"If I live, I will, corp'ral; but watch that little angel there. If we knew how to make her talk in her sleep, like Elskatawa, we'd find out some things."

The dragoon smiled, and a moment later found himself alone.

He seated himself beside Snow-bird's couch, and looked into her placid face.

The Indians who fired upon the spies and their prize while escaping from Tippecanoe in the canoe, did not offer pursuit, and the camp had been gained without molestation. The corporal had received a flesh-wound in the left arm, only; Snow-bird had saved his life, for he was holding her in his arms when the savages fired, and the ball intended for his heart lodged in her bosom.

Silas Frost found the young scout with the regulars when he joined them. He carried the rifle which he had taken from dead Oagla, in his boat against the river-drift, and with it he hoped to face the fierce Shawnees.

"I want to meet 'Tiger-Heart," he said, addressing the scout, "and I'll make 'im tell me whar Omeme is before I kill 'im."

General Harrison had posted his little army as advantageously as the ground, which afforded great facilities for the approach of savages, would permit. It was a piece of dry oak-land, rising about ten feet above the level of a marshy prairie in front (toward the Indian town), and nearly twice that high above a similar prairie in the rear, through which, and near to this bank, ran a small stream—a tributary of Tippecanoe creek—clothed with willows and underbrush. Toward the left bank, this bench of high land widened considerably, but became gradually narrower in the opposite direction, and at a distance of one hundred and fifty yards from the right flank, terminated in an abrupt point. General Wells, with the noble Kentucky militia, held the left flank; Spencer's company of mounted riflemen, the right. Major Floyd's U. S. infantry composed the front line; while the rear, deemed the most important part of the field, was intrusted to the care of Captain Baen and Lieutenant-Colonel

Decker. Captain Barton's company of the Fourth United States regiment, to which Silas Frost and the young scout had attached themselves, with Geiger's mounted riflemen, formed what was called the "left angle of the rear line."

The camp was defended by two captains' guards consisting each of forty-six men, and two subalterns' guards of twenty each. Each soldier slept opposite his post in the line.

Harrison, accustomed as he was to Indian warfare, put but little faith in Elskatawa's words, and expected an attack before day.

As the night advanced the stars were obliterated by dense masses of clouds, and thus, in darkness and cold, the morning hour of the memorable seventh of November was born.

At a quarter after four o'clock a single gun was fired on the left flank, and a savage leaped from the tall prairie grass to fall back with a bullet in his breast. The next moment, as if by magic, hundreds of dark forms appeared, and the sentinels, abandoning their officer, fled into camp. Then demoniac yells rent the air and the red avalanche descended upon Barton and Geiger's heroic detachments. Some Indians penetrated the camp.

It was the wildest scene ever witnessed in the beautiful Wabash country. In the gloom of the morning, red and white met in the shock of battle; the fires afforded the savages a partial light, until, by Harrison's command, they were extinguished, and more than one Shawnee smote his brother in the darkness.

Noticeable among the attacking party before the fires were extinguished, was a stalwart chief whose cry of "Be brave! be brave!" sounded above the death-yell, and the crack of rifles.

He was foremost in the charge, and he led the host of red demons that entirely broke Geiger's line, and piled the horse upon his rider in the terrible tableau of battle. Suddenly he wheeled and down upon Barton's unflinching regulars he came. He was naked to the waist, and his breast was tattooed in a fearful manner, with bloody pictures telling of disasters to the whites, and Indian triumphs. Three tall feathers formed his head dress, and to many proclaimed his identity. For it was pretty generally known that Tiger Heart's head

dress consisted of a trio of heron feathers, and that one was broken near the crest.

"I can't draw head on that tall fellow," said Silas Frost petulantly, addressing Hiram Gleason, who had fought at his side. "He wiggles like a worm. But now I'll wing 'im, for he's comin' this way."

Then, as the last bivouac fire was extinguished, the trapper covered Tiger-Heart's breast, and touched the fatal trigger.

The report of his rifle was not heard above the uproar of the battle.

Tiger-Heart stopped suddenly in his tracks, dropped the bloody tomahawk and staggered backward.

"I hit 'im, by hokey!" exclaimed Frost.

"Perhaps you have killed him?"

"I know I hev'n't. I didn't shoot at a vital spot. Now we're in for it."

It was the last grand charge of the Indians on the rear line that the soldiers were compelled to meet now. And a fearful onslaught it was, too.

Barton and Geiger were giving ground when Cook and Peters' gallant men came to the rescue, and turned the tide of battle. Back went the savages before the leaden hail, and Silas Frost bounded to the spot where Tiger-Heart had fallen.

The chief recognized his enemy in the faint morning light, stealing over the battle-field.

"Pale trapper shoot Tiger-Heart; but not until he get six scalps. Look at belt."

Silas Frost glanced at the Shawnee's belt, and counted six fresh scalps dangling therefrom.

"I shot you to the death," said the trapper. "Tell me where Omeme is before you go."

Tiger-Heart smiled triumphantly.

"No!" he said, and repeating the little monosyllable he fell back—dead!

"Curse the luck!" grated Silas Frost, rising to his feet. "But I'll find 'er. The red devils run an'—here! you—"

He sprang toward a wounded Indian who was leveling a rifle at his breast.

The Chippewa smiled, touched the trigger and the trapper reeled and fell upon Tiger-Heart's corpse.

The next moment Hiram Gleason's clubbed rifle put an end to the assassin's existence.

Everywhere the tide of battle was drifting to the west, and at last cheer on cheer told that the battle of Tippecanoe had ended.

The Indians had been driven into the marsh, where they could not be followed, and the Prophet was not to be seen. During the time of the contest he kept himself secure on an adjacent eminence singing a war-song. He had told his deluded followers that the Great Spirit would render the army of the Americans unsuccessful. Soon after the battle commenced he was told that his men were falling. He encouraged them to fight on; it would be as he predicted, and then began to sing louder.

"I promised to call on the corp'ral after the battle," said Silas Frost in feeble voice. "Boy, lead me down thar."

The scout raised the mortally wounded trapper, and led him into camp.

At the door of Snow bird's tent lay two stalwart savages cold in death.

"Heavens! what means this?" exclaimed the scout, and his voice called the soldier forth.

"I had a battle of my own," he said, smiling and glancing at the dead braves. "Elskatawa sent these fellows to kill or steal Snow-bird during the fight, and they came near accomplishing their work."

"Corp'ral, you're a real soldier," said Silas Frost. "But the gal?"

"She's going to live, thank heaven!"

"I'm glad on it; but old Si Frost hes got his passports to the other country."

"No you are not so badly hurt?"

"Listen!" and the trapper drew a long breath. "Hea the demon death in my old lungs! He shot me right whar I shot Tiger-Heart. Let me stretch out, somewhar."

They took him in and laid him near Snow-bird.

"Now, boys, I feel easier, an' I'm not goin' to die till I have seen Omeme again. Hiram Gleason you must bring the gal to me!"

"I will!" said the scout with determination.

"Then go, an' don't let grass grow under your feet. Si Frost isn't long fur America."

Hiram Gleason took the trapper's hand, and shook it for the last time.

A few minutes later he left the camp.

CHAPTER XV.

LIFE AND DEATH.

AFTER Silas Frost's unexpected deliverance at the hands of his bitter foe, Tiger-Heart, Omeme was borne to a cavern far remote from the thorn-tree cave.

The ferocious dogs were placed over her, and the chief bade her adieu for the last time.

She knew not where she was, for during the transfer to the new prison, she had been blindfolded, and she felt that she could not escape even though the dogs should relinquish their vigils. A thousand tortuous corridors ran beneath the bluffs, and their intricacies were known only to the wolf and the bear.

The day passed drearily enough to her. Once or twice the dogs pricked up their ears, and growled; but nobody appeared to disturb them further. She tried to win them to her side; but they showed her their teeth, and were not at all favorable to the forming of an acquaintance. So she desisted, and fell upon the couch which Tiger-Heart had prepared prior to his departure.

The growling of her canine guards awakened her, and she rose to her feet. Coosa and Lunah were showing their teeth, and looking down a dark and narrow passage-way.

Somebody was coming; but who could it be?

The Indian girl waited and watched with bated breath, and all at once thought that she could distinguish voices.

Suddenly the unmistakable twang of a bow-string saluted her ears, and one of the gaunt dogs sunk to the earth with a barbed shaft sticking in his skull.

Then two Indians rushed into the cave, and after a desperate battle the second dog was slain.

The Shawnee girl crouched at the foot of the cold stone wall of the cavern, and trembled for the results of savage victory.

"Omeme guarded by dogs," said one of the Indians, approaching her with drawn knife. "Indian kill them; now he kill the trapper's squaw."

"Will my brother slay the red girl?" demanded the other Indian, in some surprise.

"The Prophet bade me and Squirrel-Foot seek the maid here and to slay her. Squirrel-Foot was killed by white hunter. I would then have done the work alone. You joined me in the hunt, but must not stay my hand. It is the Prophet's order to slay the trapper's squaw." The Indian spoke this fiercely.

"Omeme not trapper's squaw," she said, starting to her feet. "She love him; but she never was his squaw-wife. She was his child."

The hand of the would-be murderer was on her arm, and his knife was over his plumed scalp.

"What does the Indian kill Omeme for?" she asked.

"It is the Prophet's order. Now!"

The knife was trembling on the descent, when a loud report was heard, and the brave staggered from his victim—dead!

The second Indian turned as the slayer, a white man, leaped over the dead dogs, and struck him with the heavy butt of his gun.

No second blow was needed, for the Indian's skull was crushed in, and he fell dead without gasp or groan.

"Omeme! thank heaven that I have found you at last," cried the victor, darting to the Indian girl. "I never believed you dead, and I have trailed you long, girl. Now they shall not tear you from me again. Menekton Howland can not be baffled in the end."

He paused and gazed triumphantly into the girl's face but she did not speak.

"Omeme, have you forgotten me?" he asked.

"No!"

TIGER-HEART, THE TRACKER.

"You loved me once, girl."

"Omeme never loved the king's soldier."

Howland bit his lip.

"Well, you'll love me in time," he said; "that will do. I will act so toward you that you must love me. But we will go; it must be near midnight now. The great battle is over. I will never go back to Tippecanoe; it wouldn't be a healthy place for me after this."

"Where soldier going?"

"I don't know; but I'll find some place for us, Omeme. Come! we leave the poor dogs to Tiger-Heart."

He took the girl's arm and was leading her from the cave, when a stern voice commanded him to halt.

He stopped like a man shot with an arrow. Hiram Gleason the scout stood in the mouth of the corridor, and a pistol was griped in his hand.

"What do you want?" demanded the Briton.

"The girl."

"You can have her, but first defend yourself from the foes in your rear."

Instinctively, the scout turned, and with the spring of the tiger the Briton was upon him.

He reeled beneath the clubbed rifle, and then they clenched.

It was a terrible struggle, and it proved that Monckton Howland was the stronger.

He soon found himself on the scout's breast, and was hissing his triumph into his ear, when Omeme seized the pistol which had fallen to the ground at the opening of the *meles*, and fired.

Monckton Howland rose to his feet, with pallid face, and blood on his breast.

"Girl, you've finished me!" he cried. "I never dreamed of such a doom. But he shall never—never—nev—"

The death-gurgle rattled in his throat, and he dropped a corpse at the feet of Omeme.

"Girl, I owe you a life," said Hiram Gleason, rising. "But we must not tarry here. The trapper lies in the tent of the white soldier."

"Dead?" and the girl touched Gleason's arm fearfully.

"I don't know; but he is going down the dark river, and he wants to see you before the seal is placed upon his eyes."

"Omeme will see him," she said, with tears in her eyes
"Omeme loves him."

"So, boy, you found 'er?"

Stas Frost was the speaker, and he rose to a sitting posture with the last word.

"Yes, she is yours again, Frost," said Hiram Gleason.

"I give her to you, for I am going to the trailless land, and somebody must protect her. I b'lieve you will do the square thing by the girl, an' you'll find her the angel I hev. I war too old to be her husband, and she'll take better to a younger chap. Yes, take her, boy, an' may Heaven bless you."

He sunk back upon the couch, and Omeme knelt beside him.

"It's all over, girl," he murmured. "Tiger-Heart will trail you no more. Corp'ral," and the dying eyes regarded the young dragoon, "I've told you about Muddy Brook. Take Oagla's scalp an' lay it on his grave for me; you know whar it is."

A moment later the trapper's head fell back, and with Omeme's lips resting lightly on his cheek, he died—

"Like flowers at set of sun."

While the smoke of Tippecanoe ascended to the dun November sky, tender hands composed the trapper's limbs. And a day later, Hiram Gleason and the corporal rowed down the Wabash with the body, and buried it in the cascade cavern.

And there to this day sleeps the bravest, noblest and truest trapper of the Wabash Valley.

Snow-bird recovered, and with her lover returned to Vincennes. There he was discharged, and bore with him to Kentucky the fairest bride that ever crossed the Ohio.

Hiram Gleason took his dusky love to a new settlement, near the now flourishing city of Terre Haute, and the aged parson made them man and wife.

The fate of that arch-schemer and false prophet, Elskatawa, is clothed in mystery; but it is probable that he fell by the assassin's knife. After the battle of Tippecanoe, his fol-

lowers abandoned him, for they had seen the falsity of his predictions.

Harrison's spirited little campaign produced good results. The Indians sued for peace, and two months after the battle, the frontiers never enjoyed more perfect peace.

Tiger-Heart's escape from the guarded tent may never be explained, and let us hope that Muddy Brook slept quiet y with Oagla's scalp on his grave.

Of course, Snow-bird turned out to be the "long-lost Florence Chalmers," but Elskatawa she was destined to see nevermore!

THE END

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 Evidence enough. For two males.
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 High art; or the new mania. For two girls.
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 The king's supper. For four girls.
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 A rainy day; or, the school-girl philosophers. For three young ladies.
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 The little doctor. For two tiny girls.
 A sweet revenge. For four boys.
 A May day. For three little girls.
 From the sublime to the ridiculous. For 14 males.
 Heart not face. For five boys.</p> |
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DIME DIALOGUES, No. 23.

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| <p>Rhoda Hunt's remedy. For 3 females, 1 male.
 Hans Schmidt's recommend. For two males.
 Cheery and Grumble. For two little boys.
 The phantom doughnuts. For six females.
 Does it pay? For six males.
 Company manners and home impoliteness. For two males, two females and two children.
 The glad days. For two little boys.
 Unfortunate Mr. Brown. For 1 male, 6 females.
 The real cost. For two girls.</p> | <p>A bear garden. For three males, two females.
 The busy bees. For four little girls.
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 Death scene. 2 principal characters and adjuncts.
 Dress and gold. Several characters, male and female.
 Confound Miller. For three males, two females.
 Ignorance vs. justice. For eleven males.
 Pedants all. For four females.</p> |
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DIME DIALOGUES, No. 24.

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| <p>The goddess of liberty. For nine young ladies.
 The three graces. For three little girls.
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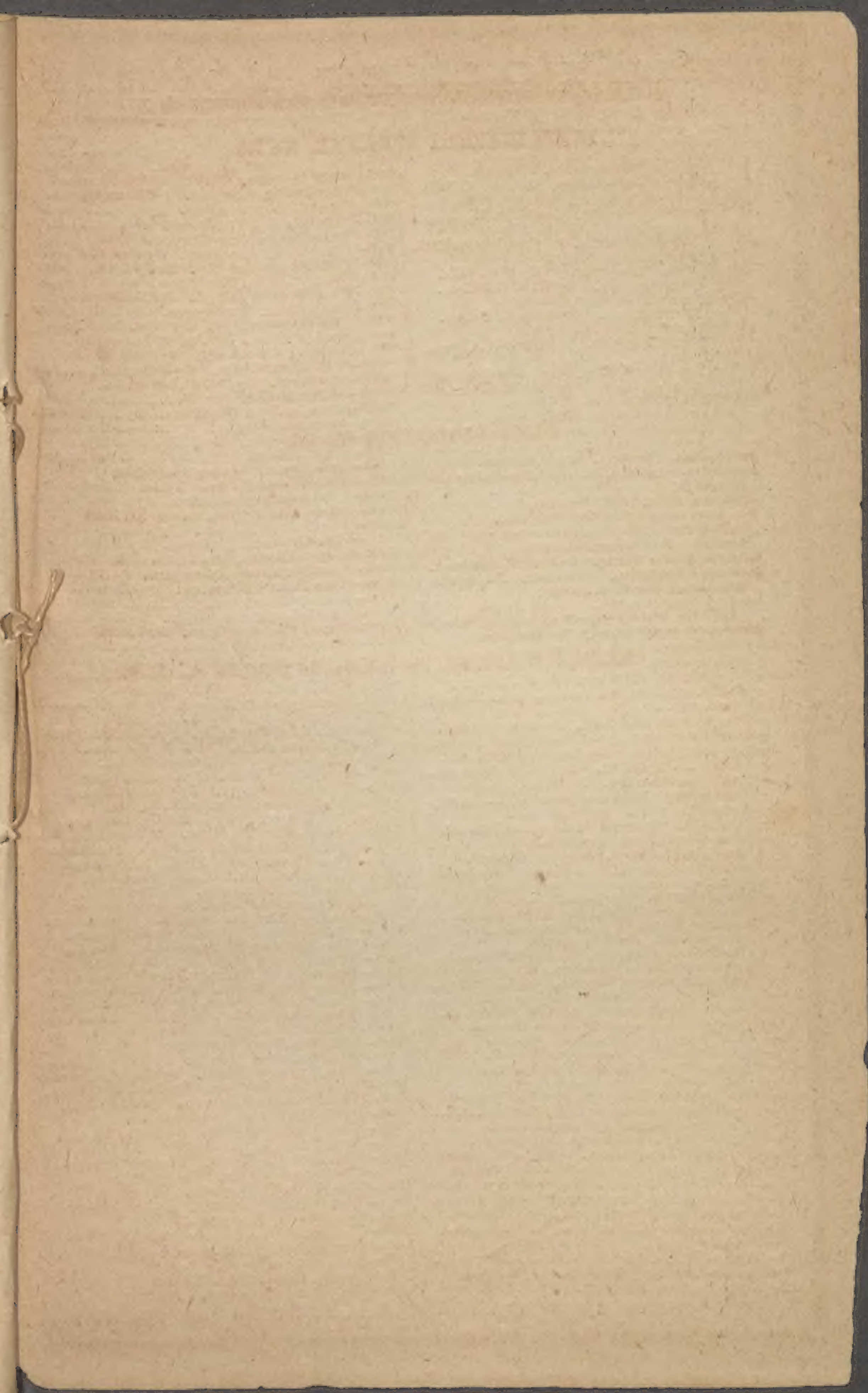
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